Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Aldana Heads Delegation to Luanda Meeting

FL2202190689 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] The Cuban delegation to the first meeting of the joint Angola-Cuba-South Africa commission, which will meet in Luanda from 23 to 25 February, arrived today in the Angolan capital. It is headed by Carlos Aldana, member of the Secretariat of the PCC Central Committee.

The goal of the commission is to facilitate a solution to any dispute that arises in the interpretation or implementation of the tripartite agreements signed on 22 December 1988 in New York. The United States and the USSR will participate as observers in this meeting. Namibia will also participate as an observer once its independence is attained.

Delegation Attends Geneva Human Rights Meeting

Seeking 'Consensus'

FL2202143089 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Raul Roa Kouri has said in Geneva, Switzerland that the Cuban Government is willing to find solutions that will lead to a consensus with the UN Human Rights Commission because Washington's accusations of alleged violations are totally false.

During the past few hours, the commission agreed by consensus on a proposal made by its president, Marc Bossuyt from Belgium, to analyze next week the report issued by the mission that visited Cuba last September at the invitation of our country's authorities as an unprecedented initiative which confirmed Cuba's decision to cooperate with the work of the UN Human Rights Commission.

The chief of the Cuban delegation said that since his arrival in Geneva, a group of delegations who are friends of Cuba, including some from Western Europe, asked that the Cuban representatives make an effort to reach a solution that will lead to a consensus in relation to the role [ubicacion] of the report in the current 45th session of the commission. Observers feel that after such an agreement, because of a lack of substance, the accusations against Cuba will be refuted.

Alleged Violations Denied

FL2202195689 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1230 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Cuba today denied a foreign citizen's accusations of violating human rights and mistreatment. A member of the Cuban delegation has said that this is part of the traditional attempts to hinder our country's revolution.

Speaking at this morning's 45th session of the UN Human Rights Commission, Miguel Alfonso Martinez, member of the Cuban delegation, affirmed that various groups now speaking against Cuba have benefited by a penal policy which permitted them to be released before completing their sentences.

He said that no citizen has been sanctioned in Cuba because of their religious or political beliefs; they have only been sanctioned for their actions in trying to push the country back into the type of regime that existed before 1959. He emphasized that those who are today presenting themselves as defenders of human rights were sanctioned by legally established tribunals for actions that are clearly considered terrorist actions by numerous other countries that have much more severe sanctions for that type of action.

Alfonso Martinez also referred to accusations of mistreatment made by a Swiss citizen during a provoked incident several months ago at Jose Marti International Airport. Regarding this, Martinez said that the Swiss citizen and her friends tried to change a tourist trip into a trip to investigate human rights in Cuba. The Swiss citizens had previously been warned by consulate officials that they would be deported if they tried to violate their tourist status.

Martinez reminded the commission that Cuba has invited several non-governmental organizations to visit the nation, including some whose opinions were known prior to their arrival—as sovereign nations they are entitled to their views. He also said that due to a basic ethical principle, the Cuban Revolution does not practice mistreatment or physical and psychological torture.

Further on Visit by Malian President Traore

Holds News Conference

FL2202043789 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Moussa Traore, acting president of the OAU [Organization of African Unity] and head of state of the Republic of Mali, has said that African countries have always been and will be grateful to Cuba for the aid given to Angola at the request of its sovereign government.

During a news conference, Traore acknowledged Cuba's cooperation with other African countries that need it. The head of state expressed his gratitude to Commander in Chief Fidel Castro for the invitation to visit Cuba, and

to the party, government, and Cuban people for the warm welcome. He also emphasized that his meetings with Cuban leaders were very fruitful.

Traore underlined the need to apply UN Resolution 435 just as it was approved. He said that Namibia's independence has been achieved thanks to the courage of the Cuban people, the African countries, and in particular Angola, who forced South Africa to sign the tripartite agreements.

Regarding Africa's foreign debt, he said that it was decided to link it with development so that debtors and creditors can hold an open dialogue.

Castro Bids Farewell

FL2202115789 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1116 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, last night said farewell to Army General Moussa Traore, secretary general of the Mali People's Democratic Union and president of the Republic of Mali.

The two leaders shared a fraternal embrace and the African leader said good-bye from the ramp of the airplane to everyone who turned out to say farewell to him at Jose Marti International Airport after an intense and productive 3-day official and working visit.

Traore's 3-day visit to Cuba can be justifiably described as a momentous event in the history of Cuban-Malian relations. [passage omitted]

Further on Castro's Meetings in Venezuela

PA2102161589 Havana Cubavision Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 19 Feb 89

["Excerpts" of President Fidel Castro's meetings and interviews with various groups in Venezuela during his 3-5 February visit for the inauguration of Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez; dates not given—recorded]

[Text] I came because I believe this a special time for Latin America, and I believe Venezuela can play a leading role. I believe this because Venezuela is one of the nations in the hemisphere most gifted with resources, and it is capable of securing greater independence for its people. Taking all of these elements into account, and with the symbolism expressed by the massive presence in Venezuela of political leaders, I decided I could not decline to come.

Cuba has lately maintained good relations with Venezuela. I cannot speak of changes in essence, but there have been qualitative changes. Some wonder whether we will reach [words indistinct] at the embassy level. That seemed so obvious to me that I forgot to discuss it with Carlos Andres, because there is a Venezuelan Embassy in Cuba, and I believe it would be consistent with this visit, the contacts I have made, this joint effort by the Cuban Embassy in Venezuela. I do not know if relations between Cuba and Venezuela are entering a new phase. Like all Venezuelans, I liked the way Carlos Andres spoke of Latin American integration and unity and the expressive reaction that ensued, the support and applause he received. I am aware that these ideas are very much alive in Venezuela, because they emerged here. I have fought tirelessly for those goals which, as we all understand today more than ever, have perhaps not been possible because of this hemisphere's [word indistinct], its communications problems, its social characteristics. I fought tirelessly for those ideals; I attempted to unite a considerable part of this hemisphere, but unity was not achieved. Marti also promoted this idea; it was constantly in his thoughts. Today this ideal has become more than a dream. It was a dream for Bolivar, but today it is considered vital to all of us. It is a matter of life or death for our countries. I have defended these ideas and will contribute with any grain of sand I can. It is our duty to defend those ideas.

You may have studied my statements, but I have studied a lot of papers from over 30 years ago. I defended the ideas of integration and unity during my first visit to Venezuela, when you all were not even born. This language is very well known to me, and I was very pleased to see Carlos Andres Perez mention integration and unity in his speech today.

[Reporter] Because so many presidents are present in Caracas, do you believe it will be possible to create a common policy toward the creditors while you are here?

[Castro] I believe we can pave the way for a common policy regarding many problems, not only the debt. The debt problem is one of the most important issues, but I believe the meetings held in Caracas by so many international—especially Latin American—leaders is very valuable and very symbolic, but not because of the issues discussed. At this type of event, where the president is inaugurated, he is the leading host; he must gather people; he must take charge of the government; he must do a series of things immediately—and it is impossible to hold meetings where problems can be discussed in depth. I believe the importance of this type of event and the participation of a large number of political leaders is that they express their resolve and the need to coordinate, unite, and work harmoniously to solve our peoples' and hemisphere's most pressing problems, to achieve their increasingly active participation in today's world.

[Reporter] Mr President, the new U.S. Administration has given certain indications that it intends to develop a more flexible foreign policy toward Latin America. Do you think that Latin America will cease to be the backyard of the U.S.?

[Castro] You have expressed with great precision [words indistinct] the idea behind what has been said. It has been said that this administration is less ideological and that it is more pragmatic. Different sources have also said that the current U.S. Administration is concerned about Latin America, and there is good reason for this concern. As I have told Americans with whom I have spoken, the United States does not have a policy toward Latin America. They have never formulated a policy toward Latin America. The United States has always improvised a policy.

If we exclude Roosevelt, who developed a good-neighbor policy at a time of crisis, the rest was improvisation. The Alliance for Progress was itself an improvisation which arose out of the Cuban Revolution. It was feared that the revolution would break out in the [words indistinct] countries.

I have told Americans that the situation in Latin America is much more serious. Since 1959-1960, Latin America has more than doubled its population. In those days there was no foreign debt. Today the foreign debt is more than $400 billion. Our products were worth something then; today they are worthless. Problems have accumulated, and Latin America has turned into a powder keg. They [the Americans] have to face up to that reality. I have said so myself to many Americans with whom I have spoken. It seems that some Americans are beginning to see that reality, and it is possible that the current U.S. Administration will also perceive it.

It has also been said that this administration thinks it was a mistake to concentrate all of its attention on Central America and to have neglected the rest of Latin America. It is evident that the Americans are concerned about Mexico, which is going through [words indistinct] nations, in spite of being a country with large resources and an important oil producer.

I think that Americans are beginning to show concern about Latin America. If that is the case, it is something positive, because the present situation cannot continue. We do not know what a situation such as this one could lead us to. I know that this is what people have said. If that is the case, it is something positive.

[Reporter] I want to ask you a question, based on the ideas that you have just stated, concerning the political commitment in Caracas to solve not only the problem of the foreign debt, which you have pointed out, but also the problems of Central America and other serious problems besetting our Latin American society from top to bottom. In that respect, what kind of political commitment will Cuba offer toward contributing to the solution of those problems?

[Castro] We have expressed our wholehearted desire to cooperate in this respect. We have also expressed our interest, because this matter is of interest to all of us. We have just gone through the experience of solving the important problem of southwest Africa. Before that we experienced hard military struggles. These struggles led us to achieve a political solution. Then we experienced many long months of negotiations. Thus, I believe that fewer problems remain. Solutions are being found. There is widespread interest in Latin America in seeking a negotiated solution to Central American problems—Latin American solutions certainly, not solutions imposed by the United States.

I think most Latin Americans who have met here talked about their problems. Costa Rican President Arias talked about them. I had a long talk with Arias today. Of course, Carlos Andres talked about them. I think Daniel Ortega talked about these matters to countless people since he got here. There is a rather widespread interest in this matter and there is a commitment. If this leads to more pragmatism and a refusal to solve Central American problems by force, many possibilities for solving problems open up. Those possibilities may not be easy. We must work patiently at solving any political problem because negotiations are arduous. If these factors become a reality—and they seem to be doing so—new possibilities will open up.

Meeting with you is not very hard for me. Quite the contrary, I find it very interesting since we must solve the same problems. I think, perhaps, one of our [words indistinct] we can learn from our experiences. I believe that your experiences are much more useful to us. I am therefore ready to talk about any topic, any matter, or topic of interest regarding technology and the organization of production. I am also interested in many things about your experiences. I am prepared to answer any question you want to ask about our experiences. What we are trying to learn is how to turn sugarcane into meat or milk. [sentence as heard] I think one of our most important breakthroughs is linked to the sugar industry. I will tell you the truth here, among friends, because we are your friends [words indistinct]. We had to invent more things than you had to. [Words indistinct] [applause] As you wish, [words indistinct] I want to that this matter is important for the tropics.

There is hunger in the tropics. There is hunger. Of all the world's plants, sugarcane is the most capable of absorbing solar energy, more so than corn, wheat, or soybeans. One hectare of sugarcane absorbs three, four, or five times more solar energy than one hectare of corn. Besides, to produce corn you must till the land every year and suffer the effects of erosion and so on. Sugarcane is perennial. It can last 5, 7, or 10 years. Sugarcane can withstand drought; corn cannot. Droughts kill corn. Sugarcane, on the other hand, maintains or increases its size. The sugarcane crop may be damaged in droughts, but it will not die.

We have always been interested in agricultural matters during the revolution, despite [words indistinct]. And I have carried out experiments because I found myself wondering what we could do to feed the population. I

have studied agriculture. The experiments demonstrated that under optimal irrigation and fertilization conditions, one hectare of land can produce 30 tons of sugar and almost 10 tons of molasses [words indistinct] percent. Do you understand the implications of one hectare of land producing 40 tons of nutrients?

How much would be derived from corn, wheat, or soybeans? A hectare of soybeans will produce 2 or 3 tons of nutrients. A hectare of corn can produce 4 or 5 tons of nutrients. In some places, hybrid corn can produce up to 6 tons of nutrients. But behold what this noble plant can produce under optimal conditions: Under normal conditions it can annually produce 10 tons of sugar and 3 or 4 tons of molasses per hectare.

If we take into consideration the tragedy of hunger, sugarcane can become a tremendous help. [Words indistinct] We have built 13 plants in the sugarmills. We are carrying out massive experiments and by year's end we could be able to report on everything that can be derived from sugarcane. There are two things that can also be done: We can either produce sugarcane as a raw material for fodder, or the mill can expel waste pulp and then process it into fodder.

We have 157 sugarmills [words indistinct] sugarcane per hectare, and we know what has to be done. The implementation of cultivation technology and draining is hard, physical work, but it doubles the yield. Our aspiration now is to extract the waste pulp in 150 sugarmills and process it [words indistinct] to improve the fodder and to improve this industry's efficiency.

The other procedure is to mill the sugar and to industrially produce fodder. One procedure is to mill sugarcane in a backyard and produce fodder. This can be done by a peasant without any kind of industrial investment. This is why we say that sugarcane is a great friend of man.

[Words indistinct] and with good reason I believe that those prices cannot be paid. I believe that all countries must try to be self-sufficient as far as food is concerned. [Words indistinct] it was suggested that you could manage the industry and that we would send you the sugar [words indistinct], but I do not think it is advisable for any country to forego producing what it can produce. We have to improve our self-sufficiency, [words indistinct], this important staple product.

I think [words indistinct] agricultural production is good. However, those prices cannot (?increase) sugarcane production. If other agricultural products experience similar problems, agriculture cannot prosper. [Words indistinct] unequal exchange between cities and urban areas. Prices for agricultural products are too low, while prices of industrial products are much higher. Industrialists will not get angry because agricultural laborers earn a higher salary. These workers will simply purchase more industrial products.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] Before I comment, I must say that I am intrigued. Did you learn all that you know about sugarcane and milk [words indistinct] while you were at the Sierra Maestra [words indistinct]? [laughter]

[Castro] [Words indistinct] I had no choice but to learn these things from all the (?theories) [words indistinct]. I (?learned) more about agriculture than about law. I could not fend for myself in school now. [laughter]

[Reporter] Politics did not convince you [words indistinct]. Your words are so unusual and persuasive that [words indistinct]. [applause]

[Castro] This whole continent is freer now than it was 30 years ago. These governments are much freer than they were before when they obeyed Washington's orders. Now they do not. They resist in many ways—the Geneva battle for human rights, the slanderous accusations against Cuba. It seems incredible, but the Latin American countries as a whole voted down U.S. motions. You cannot imagine the U.S. pressure. Reagan called presidents on the telephone. Colombia, a country with which we do not have relations, has set a perfect example and does not want to fall into the trap of dividing Cuba again.

[Reporter] There has been a very powerful revolutionary movement in this country, comrade. This means that this government has a decent position abroad.

[Castro] I am not analyzing the factors that could be involved. Generally speaking, however, Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, and Peru acted properly. We have an incredible example to cite: Who would have thought that the United States would have become so deeply involved in such a tremendous campaign? The United States exerted such pressure the second time that we decided to seek a means of alleviating the situation in these countries. The formula (?consisted of) our invitation.

I had never seen such tremendous U.S. pressure. These countries are specific examples of a concerted effort and struggle. This pressure could have been expected 30, 29, or 28 years ago. However, those countries now have a keener sense of independence. They are more aware of their exploitation. You will understand that we could not be satisfied with the way the United States has been acting. We would of course like the situation to improve even more. We think this can be achieved. This is what we are trying to do. Within this strategy and line of thought, each has the right to do as he wants. If we come up with a theory, we present it for all to see. We have even told workers: It is very important to maintain a strong position in this battle so it cannot be said that countries will become ruined, that we should not think about consumption.

We should demand that whatever is saved be invested. But let us not talk about capitalist states. It is well known that the poor capitalist states have many troubles. They

are plagued by a terrible inefficiency. We know about this because even we who are not capitalists have experienced this inefficiency. However, the (?Selva) program, which no doubt is the best, does not intend to (?subsidize) a state enterprise incapable of operating efficiently. However, we have been trying to do our best. We believe that this policy is positive, regardless of whatever each [not further identified] does, thinks, or decides. We are considering this from a general standpoint after seeing what we have seen. Shall we become frightened if worse problems arise? I have said many times: What we have to do is save our independence. Latin America's independence has been much discussed. These countries are more free now, but let us strive for total independence.

We cannot expect every Latin American state to become socialists and propose unity slogans regarding matters of possible common interest, to the extent that these countries become proletarians. These kinds of important proposals cannot be ignored even by society's middle classes. We cannot wait. We must do something in these circumstances. Something can be done. This does not mean, however, that I am optimistic. My conclusion is that if we do not do these things, we will have to do something else. But I will not be deprived of my sleep. The world is living in terrible emotional confusion. The West is taking its opportunity. We also have to consider the fact that socialist countries have been self-criticizing. Socialist countries will remain so to the very end. This is a kind of socialism to the death. [Words indistinct]. But I am much more optimistic. It is well known that socialists [words indistinct]. At least we are represented as [words indistinct]. We should take refuge in our ideas and be consistent in our beliefs. I will not spend any more time here. I still have to see several people and discuss other topics. I am most interested in thanking the Venezuelan people. I want to tell you I am deeply grateful.

The situation changed considerably for me today, but this trip appeared very difficult for me at a certain time. You succeeded in changing the situation; the people reacted; I desired to be with you and enjoy your support. This is why I want to thank you. [applause]

[Moderator] Brother Fidel, brothers: Because we believe in dialogue and want peace, we seek the democratic development of our peoples and Latin America's integration. We make a just demand, so often announced, for a new international economic order based on ethic principles. These principles unite us all, believers and unbelievers. After all, what is more important: that we believe in God, or that God believe in us and our democracies? This is the question we ask. There are Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and members of many other demominations here. A nun of the Holy Angel, who is a little devil of love and devotion, will now speak for us. [laughter] She has been sharing a beautiful experience of restoring the people's health in five neighborhoods. We call her Nacha. Her name is Maria Ignacia Reyes Ollero. This is Nacha. [applause]

[Nacha] Good morning to all. In the name of the ecumenical committee, we greet the president of the fraternal Republic of Cuba. We are a group of Christians who represent several churches and communities. We are committed in faith to our people's liberation and advancement, particularly the dispossessed majorities. The purpose of this meeting is to initiate a dialogue between Christians and the Cuban socialist state that will permit future relations in a climate of cordiality and trust. We also want to correct the distortion of facts and positions that could have diverted us from the truth in the past. Through this dialogue with you, we hope to contribute, even in a small way, toward detente and a better understanding between the Venezuelan and Cuban peoples. We want to thank you for your generosity in granting us this portion of your tight schedule of nearly 3 days during your visit to our homeland, the liberator's birthplace. May you continue to enjoy your presence among us. [applause] The floor is yours.

[Castro] I hope I will not be the only one left with the floor. [laughter] that we not only [words indistinct] dialogue.

First, I wish to apologize for not arriving punctually. My intention was to be here at the exact time—1100, I think [word indistinct]. We finished late last night, really. I held difficult meetings.

Actually, I wish to tell you it is a great pleasure, a great satisfaction for me to meet with you. As has been recalled here, we have held other meetings that have been very momentous in our relations with religious sectors, not only from Cuba but from Latin America. The first one was with 100 people, a long one. It was there that I began learning about the theology of liberation, about the existence of many priests in an active struggle identified with the popular causes, identified with the people's cause. We had a great meeting. It was a hit. A dialogue resulted from it. We have written material about all of it, because everything was recorded. Everything is recorded nowadays. [laughter] This is the era of recorders and electronics. [laughter]

Then I attended a meeting in Jamaica—a long one—while on a visit there. After that I held a meeting in Nicaragua; it was not with a large number of people because of the time frame. Nicaraguan Christians participate very actively in the struggle to emerge from the terrible nightmare of Somoza's regime. (?We) have very close and very old relations [words indistinct] notice a growing participation.

Therefore, when I was told at the time of the festivities of the 30th anniversary about the possibility of holding a meeting of this kind, I immediately agreed. Besides, I was very grateful because [words indistinct] a terrible

campaign to which you are witness, a campaign that involved no hesitation in using all sorts of arguments, slander, and even psychological warfare. We could say it was almost a call for assassination [word indistinct] crime.

I could see the campaign was well-organized, active, and orchestrated for the purpose of creating hatred and dislike and making the trip difficult and dangerous, because the adversary's activities were not limited to organizing plans of all kinds and moving in every direction. They launched a sort of psychological warfare against the visit.

They put obstacles in the path of my trip, thus making it difficult, because all those things—besides what happened earlier, such as the plane sabotage, there were other irregular actions, such as the culprits escaping from prison or being exempted from responsibility—created a climate of great uneasiness. Therefore, I am sure that if we had taken a poll, at least 98 out of every 100 citizens would have been opposed to the trip. All that made things very difficult for me, but I was encouraged by the interest you had expressed in having this meeting. I had your support, the support of other honest friends of our country and our revolution, particularly the support of Venezuelans. Life has once again shown me the value of having confidence in people, in their ethic, noble actions and instinct, because only the peoples' instincts can explain why a very well-organized activity such as the one they carried out was counteracted. This is not new; it goes back a long time. They carried out many campaigns against Cuba; they carried out special campaigns against Cuba.

I have believed in and again confirmed the value of believing in the people. The revolution made this possible for us amid very difficult conditions. This has been reflected again by the excellent reaction of the people, including biased ones, who admitted having held this or that idea about me, but contacts and interviews—which I did not start or seek; in fact, reporters virtually forced them on me—were enough to help to change opinions significantly. I believe the same holds true for my having arrived here to face a very hostile atmosphere, because nobody has faced a campaign prior to a trip like I did.

Tension has abated; there is a relaxed atmosphere now. Also, this is the first morning meeting. Thus, I believe we all feel more energetic and are looking forward to maintaining a constructive dialogue. I hope it will not turn out to be a monologue or a press interview [laughter]. At any rate, I will gladly answer any question or discuss any topic you want.

[Moderator] Thank you. We want a frank and fraternal dialogue with brother Fidel; as we say here, we want to speak our minds [a calzon quitado] [laughter]. This does not mean asking malevolent questions and the like, but sincere ones.

[Castro] You would not be Christians if you did that. [laughter]

[Moderator] You would not be Christian. First we have Orangel Rivas, sociologist, lay Catholic from the university parish, member of Informa—the people's correspondents network [red de corresponsales populares]—and coordinator for the Center for Services of the Caracas Christian People's Groups...

[Castro, interrupting] He has more titles than I have.

[Unidentified speaker] I am not very tall but I am very trustworthy. [laughter]

[Rivas] Brother Fidel: A revolutionary process has taken place in Cuba, which has meant greater levels of social welfare and social and political justice for the Cuban people. It has also meant the beginning of deep-rooted relations of solidarity. In this context, I want to ask you about the specific contribution of the poor people's church—of the church inspired by liberation theology—to the process of the Cuban Revolution?

[Castro] I think the Cuban process was different than the Nicaraguan process or the process currently taking place in El Salvador, for example. This is because of various historical factors. However, this movement did not exist at the time our revolutionary struggle was taking place. This is a completely new historical event which emerged in the 30 years that have passed since the triumph of the revolution. All people participated in the revolution, including Christians from various denominations. There were also some martyrs—in other words, Christians, Catholics and other denominations—who died in the struggle as individual citizens. This new thing—the active and strong participation with social justice as its goal, seeking to help people, and fully identifying with the people—did not exist. This is a factor that should be taken into account.

The predominant church in Cuba at that time was the Catholic Church, although other churches existed. There were clergymen from other churches in general; they were Christians. Some other types of religions—animism, syncretism, the combination of various beliefs—did not exist. Those were some of the factors. There was another factor: Our people's religious beliefs were not as strong as in other Latin American societies. These beliefs are very strong in Mexico, where I have found very devout feelings, as it is in almost all Latin America. This could have been influenced by various factors, perhaps by historical factors such as the independence struggle, which in a sense was a struggle between the Spanish power and the Spanish colony—with a basically Spanish clergy that opposed the independence struggle. I have not done an in-depth analysis on what factors determined the difference between the very strong religious spirit in Latin America and the weaker religious spirit in Cuba.

In addition, Catholicism, which was the predominant religion in Cuba at that time, had been dispersed basically among higher-income sectors in the country. Religious education was conveyed basically through private religious schools where middle-class families sent their children. However, there were some churches run by poorer religious organizations. The rule was that people had to pay for religious education. However, because of economic factors, parents could not afford to send children to religious schools. I myself was a boarding student at a religious school when I was very young, but you had to pay for that. Basically, middle-class and upper-class sectors could afford this. There were no churches in the countryside.

I do not remember seeing a church in the Cuban countryside, just as I do not remember seeing a Catholic priest in the Cuban countryside. There were priests in the countryside from other Christian groups, sometimes in the mountains or in other places, but they were very few; they were very good people. Actually, we met them in the mountains during the war. There were not many of them. This determined the factor that religious education and the practice of religion, particularly Catholicism, did not take place at the grass-roots level.

I repeat: I do not remember seeing a church in the countryside. Moreover, a priest used to visit the countryside once in a while to baptize people, but baptisms were very formal. There was not a disciplined practice, even of religious principles. [Words indistinct] There is more discipline in this regard in other countries. You see more discipline even in the United States. I saw this among Catholics, Protestants, and other Christian churches; you see a greater practice of religion. These phenomena did not exist in Cuba.

However, since the triumph of the revolution, laws affect the more wealthy classes: the landholders, wealthy homeowners, and landlords. The revolutionary laws conflicted with those wealthy sectors. Thus, a phenomenon took place: Struggle began. There was an attempt—not by the church, but by those predominant, very influential sectors in the church—to use religion and the church against the revolution. That phenomenon took place. We were very careful with all that [words indistinct]. We did not respond with antireligious or anti-Christian stands. Instead, we responded with Christian arguments advocating many of the factors that were part of the preachings of Christ—who, in my opinion, was a revolutionary; his preachings continue to be revolutionary, from our point of view.

In other words, we never based criticism or analysis on antireligious views. However, we did criticize the stance of those who wanted to use the church and the stance of those who were already openly against the revolution. In some places, priests were guilty of this, as was the church as an institution, but this was in isolated cases. We cannot say that the church as an institution was guilty of this phenomenon in Cuba.

This complicated things very much, mainly with the Catholic Church. The other groups—how would you describe the other churches that are not Catholic? The Christian churches? However, Catholics are also Christians, and we cannot take this away from them. Then there are the Evangelicals. Actually, we had no conflicts, practically very little problems, with the Evangelical Church, with the other churches, because they are more popular with the masses and are more numerous.

Certain conflicts did arise, other types of conflicts, with the Jehovah Witnesses. There were problems because they were opposed to vaccination campaigns or blood tests. As you can understand, blood tests are required today for practically all types of medical attention. There were other types of conflicts, such as pledging allegiance to the flag, complying with military service, and other types of conflict. There were other types of conflicts, such as increasing the prestige of the nation's symbols during a confrontation as strong as a conflict with the United States. These were the types of conflicts that arose. I think these historic factors determined and explained why there was not a considerable amount of activity by the religious groups in favor of the social changes. I would say they participated, as part of the people, in all activities, as citizens, as patriots, in supporting the revolution or in defense of the revolution.

Then, that sort of activity... [changes thought] The church's involvement lacked the characteristics it had in Nicaragua or undoubtedly would have had in any other Latin American country. In Nicaragua, the church's involvement in the struggle against Somoza and the revolution's subsequent actions was very large and active. The churches even carried out important international actions in support of the Nicaraguan people and the struggle against the dirty war. In El Salvador, there is noticeable support for church involvement. In El Salvador, Msgr Arnulfo Romero was very active and, say, militant against genocide and crimes. That had a great impact, which even led to the archbishop's murder. The degree of involvement of the Catholic Church and all the other churches reached that level.

I know the church plays a major role in the Salvadoran people's struggle against genocide, which is very good, because it paves the way for future relations. In Nicaragua, there is a conflict, a rather subjective conflict, based on independence of the personalities involved. The church has greatly supported and identified with the Nicaraguan revolutionary movement; there were even priests in the government, something that at one point became a source of conflict with the Nicaraguan church and the Vatican. I think this can be explained in terms of the differences between the situation in Cuba and the rest of Latin America, which is something else.

You have countries like Brazil, where the church has tremendous influence and played an extraordinary role during the times of military repression. It helped many people; it supported many people; it saved many lives; it

greatly identified with the cause of the poor. It has defended everybody; it has defended peasants, workers, and even prostitutes; it has had a broad-minded and noble attitude in the suffering of a segment of society. I say this is a very noteworthy example in Latin America's largest country. The church has played a very important role. But this was not the same in Cuba, as you know, because national differences came into play here. It has a little to do with the church hierarchy's independence to act. In Argentina, the church was different than in Chile and Brazil, because a segment of Argentine society strongly associated those church sectors with the government.

These differences are circumstantial and temporary. However, as a principle and norm, religious groups have an increasingly important role in easing the suffering—even more as the crisis grows in all these countries. There were difficult situations in our countries when establishing these relations between church and state. I really think one of the achievements of our revolution was to have handled these problems with great, great tact and utmost care. We avoided at all costs giving the Cuban Revolution an antireligious slant. We avoided that. We avoided confusing antagonisms with a struggle against believers or against religious people. This has happened in few social revolutions; this almost never happened in any revolution. Instead, history mentions a lot of examples of serious conflicts. Conflicts occurred in the French Revolution—the first revolution—and later in the Russian revolution, the Spanish Civil War, and the Mexican revolution. There were many cases of priests killed by firing squad or one way or another during those bloody conflicts. In Spain, there were bloody incidents on both sides. Priests who sided with the rebels or with the Republic were shot by firing squads. There were very powerful incidents in Mexico.

We were fortunate and privileged that we did not have any of these problems in our country. I would say the greatest conflict involved the request by a group of foreign priests to leave. In all these things, I failed to add we had a lot of Spanish—not native—clergy in our country.

Furthermore, this Spanish clergy... [changes thought] I know that for a fact; I can vouch for it because I studied under the Jesuits. I will have you know that the Jesuits are a rebellious lot. Historically they have had a reputation for... [changes thought] I remember that the Jesuits at the school where I studied were all Spaniards. They supported the government, and they supported [deceased Spanish General Francisco] Franco. As a matter of fact, they acted as if they were Spanish nationalists. Many members of the clergy in question had those attitudes.

In fact, the most drastic measure taken against them—I would say, perhaps, the only one, none of which was of a repressive nature... [changes thought] There is not a single case of a priest ever facing a firing squad; nor, I tell you, would there ever have been a case, no matter what crime that priest might have committed. We were very careful to avoid any appearance of an antireligious orientation during the revolution. In some cases of conspiracy—there were few—and in cases involving crimes with prison sentences, the stay in prison was a short one. We always found a way or justification to free that priest. Then there was the case of the chaplains during the invasion. Well, it is a different matter when chaplains are concerned. However, when you are the chaplain of a mercenary army that is invading a country, well, they were jailed for a period of time, but that is all. Not a single case of harsh repression against a priest ever occurred in our country. The priests spent very little time in jail. Msgr (?Sacci), a wise and wonderful papal nuncio, was in Cuba at the time, and he was very helpful.

He understood the revolution, was aware of the prevailing attitute, and helped a great deal in smoothing things over with the Catholic Church. I tell you, however, that it was very difficult for a revolution as radical as the Cuban Revolution to go through its initial phase without having any serious problem of this kind. We take pride in having had a revolution that handled the religious problem well, even better than others had handled it. We take pride in this and today it gives us moral strength.

Furthermore, as revolutionaries we were fully aware that if our revolution had had an antireligious orientation, we would have veered toward imperialism and those who try to colonize and exploit us. The Catholic Church's presence in our country and in all Latin America is very strong, and we would have furthered the interests of our people's enemies if the revolution had had a negative attitude toward it. To do so would have served the wrong cause, because we were interested in attaining our freedom; that is to say, we want to achieve justice, change, progress, unity, and Latin American integration. We have therefore avoided extremisms, radical behavior, and these matters. This does not mean that [words indistinct] in matters of doctrine that arose. I would say that the differences were more evident than at any other time in history and for the most part these differences were with the Catholic Church, because, as I have said, it identified itself with these sectors [not further identified]. Today, as a system of social justice and equality is established, the church is becoming more popular in light of the work it does for workers, peasants, and the people. The negative atmosphere has changed, and I believe we have reached a situation that is very promising.

[Moderator] We have to thank God and perhaps the devil too [laughter] for the money he spent in paper and ink to make this meeting possible [words indistinct] to avoid so many communiques that went against this [words indistinct].

[Castro] Listen to me. The ecumenical topic is so broad that we even have to take the devil into account. [laughter]

[Moderator] We are convinced that the devil exists and that we do not need [words indistinct] or anthropological methods to understand this [words indistinct] if we were not burdened by the arms buildup, injustices, and hunger. Commander Fidel, perhaps we could save time by arranging the five or six remaining questions in series...

[Castro, interrupting] As long as I can recall the questions and answer them one at a time. [laughter]

[Moderator] First, Lourdes Perez, a Catholic layperson, mother, resident of [name indistinct] in Petare—a very well-known low income area—[words indistinct] and she works at the Book Bank, a popular library.

[Perez] My name is Lourdes Perez and I belong to the Christian community of Petare. Mine was question number two, which has practically been answered already. Has 30 years of Cuban Revolution changed the commitment toward the church?

[Castro] Was that the question?

[Perez] Yes.

[Castro] As I said earlier, the church has been actively supporting the revolution's social work. There are some things that are not perfect and there have been many kinds of problems. To cite one example, there is the rise in the divorce rate. This is of great concern to the state and to socialism. We see the effect it has on the family; we always see the importance it has. We call upon the family to play its role in the childrens' education. Generally speaking, problem kids, adolescents, youths, or adults, criminal types, or those who have other problems come from broken homes, unstable homes. The family has an enormous influence in shaping the citizens' personality, and we demand this of families.

[Passage indistinct] education programs. My idea is that the fight against crime starts at the kindergarten level; it starts at home. Many times we see behavioral difficulties, and these boys many times are precocious criminals that need a special type of school. We are satisfied with the way we have been able to influence this personality type at special schools. These special schools are very expensive; they have many more specialized teachers, but fortunately they show good results. If we conducted a study on what factors determine this personality type, we always—practically without exception—find that family problems are the cause.

We cannot forbid divorce. If we did, we would be going backward socially. This problem is not really solved by prohibition. A simple rule or law does not prevent family problems. There are many countries where divorce is not allowed, but this does not necessarily mean more stability in the home. To give you an example, I was visited by some cardinals and we discussed those types of problems [words indistinct]. Abortion is no longer forbidden, but the high number of abortions worries us. We try to avoid the need for them in the first place; then we can make abortions unnecessary. We try to instill moral principles and ethics, for this is very good for the society we want to develop and create. For example, the ethical conduct of a citizen—and we believe there must be ethics in the full sense of the word—allows us to create the type of society and individual we want to have.

For example, we have the very important social duty of providing technical assistance to care for the people, the sick, the incurable. These things happen. These are real situations, and one of the things that brings us closer is the work of the revolution and the official church's growing concern over the development of health programs.

We have provided cooperation in various parts of the world. The Vatican recently sponsored an event in Rome, which our education minister was invited to attend, and the pope met with them. In fact, I sent a message stating that we have doctors available. Thousands of doctors have been trained through our programs, and they are willing to work in Third World (?countries).

I said that if the church had a program somewhere and needed doctors—we know that it is difficult to get doctors to go to the heart of Africa and many other places—we would gladly help.

We have also made the offer to other institutions: the WHO, the United Nations, and various churches. We have not only made the offer to the Catholic Church; we have also offered help to other churches because we want to treat all churches equally. We do not want to (?imply) that we give preferential treatment to some churches over others. We are willing to cooperate with all churches that need doctors for cooperation programs in the Third World. We said this, and the pope even met with our health minister, and they had a nice talk. This gives you an idea of the current level of contacts or relations and the changes that have been made regarding this issue. I think that in the future we can expect an increased role in the social work that you mentioned.

[Moderator] Dr Edgard Mora, president of the Presbyterian Church of Venezuela and professor of philosophy at the University of the Andes.

[Mora] Commander, you have briefly referred to this topic and I would like you to expand on it. You have talked at length about Christianity in its relation to the process currently under way in Cuba and the continent. It [Christianity] plays a role in the revolution and the cause of freedom, but there is a theoretical issue: How do Marxist-Leninist circles handle the concept of religion as the opiate of the masses as a revolutionary theory? Can this be asserted nowadays? Must this be construed differently? What is your opinion?

[Castro] We are totally against any emphasis on this type of thing as a rule and our view is not something that occurred to us all of a sudden—this desire to eliminate any emphasis on political classes and all that. We have progressively [words indistinct] type of norms because there was a time when more emphasis was given—routinely or traditionally for dogmatic reasons, I might add—to the influence that [words indistinct] had on another country's [words indistinct]. The same goes for other things despite our tremendous desire for independence, even though this has been a creative revolution, and even though we did a lot of things our way.

There is more and more emphasis on differences, because life has taught us that we must pay the price for copying things, even though we have copied only a few things. I might add that it is an imported [word indistinct]—not only imported but also resulting from old traditions. A lot of emphasis has been placed on (?religious) issues—I think there are even some books on this—but we will progressively minimize these [words indistinct] until they are eliminated.

I believe that, fortunately, in other countries where social changes are taking place these problems will not occur; and if they do, it will be in only a few countries. This type of problem will not appear because conditions would have already been created before these changes take place and therefore such discrepancies will not be found. In fact, there has been an increase in the civil and ecclesiastical struggle in these countries where the majority is religious and where there is a modern approach, whereby the religious groups play a growing and active role in the struggle for social justice and changes and in the struggle for national independence.

In our case, we are obligated to start eliminating this kind of thing from taking place, since these concerns are not essential to the revolution. I have often discussed the issue of identity and the relationship between Christians and socialists, Christians and Marxists, with the objective of making changes. However, [words indistinct] you asked me that question and I am responding to it in full.

Religion could be an opiate at a specific time, and history has recorded this, because there have been times when the relationship between church and state has been close. There have been many phases; Christianity has undergone different phases—including martyrdom, which lasted such a long time, centuries of sacrifices—and that is why I say Christianity resembles Marxism, because the same things done to the Christians were later done to communists in many places. They were not thrown into the lions' pit, because that was not the usual practice, but very bad things were done to them [laughter] [words indistinct] done by Nazism and elsewhere.

This relationship (?is reflected in history), but I reversed the order; it can be obvious or it can be a marvelous remedy to the extent that [words indistinct] identification and to the extent that it becomes a weapon to defend the interests and rights of the peoples, the masses, and the countries.

I say that this is not a new idea; it is not something that certain people could brand as political opportunism because new things have been invented in view of the circumstances—but it is something that came up about 20 years ago. I say that everything is a phase, a process; these things do not really change. You know that nothing changes overnight. Changes come about as a result of a determination to change a process, a path, and I can say that I am (?dissatisfied) with the results that [words indistinct] have been making on these issues.

[Moderator] Reverend Jose Antonio Valenzuela, minister of the Venezuelan Anglican Church and regional representative of the Latin American Council of Churches for the Caribbean and greater Colombia; that is, Colombia and Venezuela.

[Valenzuela] Mr President, Cuba has the largest number of Christian churches registered in the Latin American Council of Churches. This has led to a broad dialogue and very effective ecumenical work. To a certain extent, this has been possible thanks to the climate of trust and support we have received from the Cuban Government.

This dialogue is also open throughout Latin America, particularly at the level of a practical agenda to aid the poor. We would like to know what the Cuban Government's general outlook toward the theology of liberation and the Latin American peoples' liberation movements is in the context of the ecumenical dialogue concerning this; and what is expected, what will be the future agendas for the relationship between the state and Cuban churches within this ecumenical framework?

[Castro] [Words indistinct] the economic issues, and I am very happy, since I attended—as I already said—religious schools from the first grade until graduation not that long ago [laughter]; or at least to me it does not seem that long ago. At that time there was no ecumenism at all. I recall things that teachers and priests told us. We could not say a word about Protestantism; the devil was good [laughter] in comparison to a Protestant.

Judaism could not be mentioned either, because Jews were blamed for the assassination and crucifixion of Christ. There was a terrible sectarianism in the 1930's and 1940's. Ecumenism has become so strong lately that I would say that it is virtually like the field of electronics. [laughter]

I was surprised by—because I witnessed it—the sectarian spirit, a virtual spiritual war among the churches. That is what I noticed. I did not study under the Protestant Church, but the Catholic Chruch was affected by an intense sectarianism. Therefore, current developments mean enormous, marvelous changes that are rational and extraordinarily important. In the Catholic Church, the pope is active in international meetings even with other non-Christian Churches. That kind of [word indistinct] is becoming evident.

I agree with and like very much that type of religious cooperation. I believe that is the kind of attitude that corresponds with the modern man because man is much more rational, wise, and intelligent than in the past, while still having much room for improvement. There is still too much madness in the world, such as nuclear weapons and the danger of nuclear war and ecological catastrophies. There are so many threats looming over this society that has developed technology that is beyond man. Technological advances are now beyond the evolution of human intelligence. It is, therefore, urgent to [words indistinct]. I believe the churches of the world will have to solve problems regarding not only social justice or peace [words indistinct] great strength. They will first have to try to solve ecological problems.

What worries me is that future generations will have to face even more serious problems than the ones we are now facing. That is my impression. Ecological problems are no longer long-term problems, but medium-term problems. Scientists have already discovered that the ozone layer is dissolving and that who knows how many people will die of cancer. They are discovering that the destruction of the ozone layer will have a negative, greenhouse effect and disastrous consequences for the world. Temperatures will increase and the world will once again become like it was when dinosaurs existed. There were large natural disasters before man existed, that is true, but the things that man has invented are bringing new, worse disasters. Every year humanity produces 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide, which enters the atmosphere.

All these things constitute a series of threats which, I think, will force various churches to [word indistinct]. That will require unity among churches and will force churches to work together. We, of course, cannot be, cannot participate in the [word indistinct] communism, unless you include the PCC within the group of ecumenical churches. [laughter, applause] We can cooperate with and support unity among churches. In that sense, we are willing to give [word indistinct] and provide facilities. Many meetings have been held in Cuba. I think that only last year approximately 600 people from various religious groups participated in meetings held in Cuba. There is an increasing [words indistinct] do not do it for tourism reasons, because believers are usually poor [laughter] and [words indistinct] go to a church [word indistinct] for tourism reasons, but not ours.

We support and facilitate the organization of meetings. A large meeting of U.S. Spanish-speaking Catholics was recently held in Cuba. I am saying this to give you an example. Many people came, including many former Cuban citizens. Cuban priests [words indistinct] revolution publicly [words indistinct] gave them all the support [Castro pounds the table] to hold that special meeting of the Catholic Church, in which everybody participated fully. Bishops and even cardinals [word indistinct] because I know [words indistinct] had prevented the [word indistinct] to talk of the Protestant and Evangelical Churches. Many of their leaders throughout the world come often to Cuba. They do not even need a visa to come into the country, regardless of where they come from. They have held various kinds of meetings. [Words indistinct] had more problems, because Catholic events have had all our support and will always have all the support they need to conduct the activities you mentioned.

[Moderator] Here is a very dear priest from our community. He is Cuban and works in the heavily populated parish of Caricuao in Caracas. In Caricuao they conducted a sort of foreign debt Station of the Cross. It was an impressive experience. The first station was the Latin American children condemned to death by the payment of the debt.

[Castro] Oh, that is [words indistinct].

[Priest] I am Cuban and continue to be Cuban. I am very proud of having maintained my citizenship. Some 30 years ago, my father and I saw you in Havana. I was a child then.

[Castro] You or me? [laughter] [Words indistinct] a child I stayed [words indistinct].

[Priest] I was 12 years old then.

I was told that Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar were going to go by. [Words indistinct] saw you with Camilo Cienfuegos. I always had the [words indistinct]. I was told [words indistinct] the baby Jesus. I was told you were a magi.

[Castro] What was that? [laughter]

[Priest] You were not the baby Jesus, which made me very sad. I was lucky to work first in a low-income sector for 20 years. Twenty-five years later, I was fortunate to return to our fatherland. I saw for myself that in the town of [name indistinct] in Pinar del Rio, the baker's son, the son of Tunso who cleaned shoes, my cook's son, were doctors, others had scholarships, she [not further identified] ran the town's rehabilitation center. When I heard the comments of many of my compatriots, [words indistinct], right?

I was very happy because a prayer to the Virgin Mary says that in the last days of the Kingdom of God the mighty will fall from their thrones and the meek will be exalted. I was able to attest to that. I talked to the people of my hometown. I told them that it was important to preach a pure gospel, Christ's true gospel, not the gospel the powerful use to hide their actions, as I saw in a television program here. I do not think [passage indistinct].

Now, I saw a lot of fear in the Christians, who are Catholics, about preaching that gospel. I even visited persons... [changes thought] By the way, I can also say that I went everywhere [words indistinct]. I visited seven churches, and no one told me that there were things I could not do. Yet many people had said to me: You are crazy; you will not be able to do that there. I moved with complete freedom. [Words indistinct] they lent me the [words indistinct]. I do not know if I am going to get the [words indistinct] manager in trouble. [laughter]

[Castro] We would not criticize them if they did those things. We would have criticized them if they had not lent you that (?hotel). [laughter]

[Priest] Therefore, what I see is [words indistinct]. What can we do? [passage indistinct] It really caught my attention when you said that the gospel of Christ and the church [words indistinct] of morals, the family, even of violations. This concept of internationalism fascinated me. I understood it through a missionary approach. I saw it from that perspective. One can agree with the use or nonuse of weapons, but having to sacrifice oneself... [changes thought] I heard of a young man who had served in Angola [words indistinct]. We are on different paths. What can we do in and out of Cuba? I am interpreting the feeling of many...

[Castro, interrupting] Yes...

[Priest, interrupting] ...priests. Some priests do not share that view, but already we are starting [words indistinct]. What can we do so that schools and children know the true Christ and the true gospel? [Words indistinct] This is the way the Cuban state [words indistinct]. I talked to Havana citizens. The people [words indistinct]. [Castro laughs] [Words indistinct] What can we do to expand it? I do not know if with this I am...

[Castro, interrupting] I understand; I understand. [repeats himself] I appreciate your comments. I find them very stimulating. I understand your meaning very well. People should not be afraid. Problems remain to be solved and difficulties remain to be overcome. As you said, I partly answered that question. I made a historical analysis of the factors that have led to this situation and, as I explain all the time, have led to a discriminatory practice. All of us are struggling against it, and we want to change it. I also explained the idea of having to work with our own people. I think we are making progress in this regard. If I were to tell you about the [word indistinct] school, that concept would be even more difficult to understand because despite the general progress we have made, we have not made progress in this field.

We must change situations to allow the things you mention to happen. Then we will see that if the churches are opened and [words indistinct] religious education in the churches, the Constitution would almost have to be changed, which, of course, is not to say that it is unchangeable. However, the problem is not just to have an idea [words indistinct]; instead, it is necessary to create the conditions that will allow it. Therefore, I said, we had to be patient. These problems cannot be solved overnight [words indistinct] to go as far as we can. I say that if religion will [words indistinct] ethics, it will completely be in the best interests of society and socialism, as well as what we call communist society. That is not the socialist society, because the former is more egalitarian and just. We see it in the distant future.

We need ethics, a lot of ethics, solidarity, a feeling of love for one's neighbor. What is socialism in the final analysis but a love and a feeling of solidarity for others? What are the internationalist missions, where people are ready to give their lives, but love for one's neighbor? Not just the neighbor next door, but neighbors from all over the country and all over the world. When one accepts the idea of dying for Africans, we have no doubt gone very far, especially if one thinks how much men love life. By way of example, I can say that more than 300,000 Cubans, your compatriots and mine, have been to Angola [words indistinct] of moral values. What capacity for sacrifice and generosity people have! We considered these principles for other reasons based on human values. The church considers these principles to be based on religion and religious duty. The church is beginning to consider it as a human duty.

That love is very important, not because one must fulfill a principle and not because one is going to get a reward for what one does, but because this is a humanitarian as well as a religious duty. We have gone very far on [word indistinct] to create. We have shown man's capacity to assimilate values and to adhere to and be faithful to some values, even at the risk of his own life. Therefore, I think man is just an essential [words indistinct]. If we combine this religious feeling with other values, I imagine they will be even more solid. That is why we talked about the need to unite them and to take them as far as possible. We must improve the world. We must change the world. We must create more just societies. This will also be a matter of time.

However, we have a moral, political, and ethical duty to achieve that. Furthermore, I can cite other examples, such as that of the teachers in Nicaragua. We were asked to send 1,000 teachers. Thirty thousand offered themselves. Then 2,000 went, so they got 1,000 more [than they had asked for]. There were even many women. They went to remote places and mountains. They were women who had families, because the majority of elementary school teachers in our country are women.

A missionary must make sacrifices by going to strange places all over the world. In Peru, [words indistinct] the revolution's capability to produce missionaries. Even when some of those teachers were killed, 100,000 more volunteered. I have a book with the signatures of those 100,000—they signed at the most dangerous time. Here one must see certain similarities between Christianity and socialism. I am sure that every time Christians were

sacrificed in Rome, the number of Christians did not dwindle; I would venture to say they tripled. Martyrdom multiplies; your and our religions have proved it. Our values become what we could call religious; and it must be true because there are so many martyrs.

You can see that even when we start off from different points of view, our feelings, purposes, and objectives are the same. This indicates human potential. There are those who are moved by religious causes—human values, heroism—and are willing to die for their faith. The socialist and internationalist who believes in those values is also demonstrating his willingness to die for his faith—in other words, to die for his faith and dedication to those values. However, time must be allowed for these changes, because these changes are still evolving. As advances are made in these fields, your ideas can be realized perhaps in the future.

I believe that at this time, ideas such as those would be untimely. What is timely is [words indistinct]. I think we must rid ourselves of all those prejudices—dangerous things, old things; someone left and a place must be made for him, or he did not want to speak. [sentence as heard] [20-second break in reception] ...immoral, unethical, and for many years it became the norm, just as many lies have become the norm, and much has to do with our own country, which is not perfect by any means. Mistakes have been made, but our country has been very loyal to certain principles.

Repugnant slander is voiced against our country—that we torture and do other things. It is inconceivable that someone can believe that this sort of conduct could go on for 30 years. Do you think that a people like ours, which we appreciate and value so much, would permit such a thing? I say just go out and ask people in the street—here everyone knows everything. People even know if someone has a girlfriend [laughter], and this should not be the case.

Has anyone ever heard of someone being killed, kidnapped, or tortured? People would laugh; but how many people in the world believe this? I hear stories from children. [Words indistinct] There is a father of a friend of ours who has some children who said: This is the man who eats children! [laughter] Imagine what is accomplished by constant repetition.

I agree that there are differences and that everything should be said and be open to criticism. If you want, go ahead and say that capitalism is a thousand times better than socialism, if that is what you want to say. Fight, but fight cleanly.

Fight with serious arguments and irrefutable logic. I believe that if anyone resorts to slander and lies, it means that he lacks valid arguments. We felt satisfied when we heard what you [not further identified] said, above all because you have managed to develop that spirit and have been able to express yourself through such noble humanitarian work against all odds. I am glad that you had the opportunity—I wish everyone had such an opportunity—to visit my country and to see everything.

Everyone knows that our adversaries have a monopoly, that the news media and international news agencies report and broadcast what they want. It is amazing how this is one of the weapons which they always use to defend their domination through lies, slander, and propaganda—because they have turned the use of propaganda into a science. I do not like the word propaganda because it sounds like something prefabricated to convince someone through sophisms and lies. That is why I am not exactly satisfied with what you said.

Yesterday I had another source of satisfaction. I was talking with some Dominican journalists and one of them said: Do you know that [words indistinct] the victory of the revolution? My father was a Trujillist and I began to organize a committee to wage a struggle against the Cuban Government. He said that a Jesuit priest told them: You are fools because... [changes thought] He was apparently in a Catholic school. The journalist added: Excuse me for talking about the past, but the priest said: Castro—or Fidel, as everyone usually calls me—was a much better student than you, much more intelligent than all of you, a much more capable person than all of you, and—above all—he already knows what you are doing! [laughter]

The journalist said that this was said by a Jesuit priest, a certain Father Arias, and he mentioned another priest. The journalist said that they had taught in his school. [Words indistinct] that man but he later joined the struggle against the U.S. invasion and [words indistinct]. This also renews our faith, because lies are not eternal.

I think that this is an example that provides an explanation for my trust in the Venezuelan people's capabilities, intelligence, and patriotism—which have been proven by their reactions and attitude. I have seen how they destroyed a house of cards—meaning the mountain of prejudice that someone tried to create against Cuba, the revolution, my visit, and all the other issues. We must bear in mind that this is part of a process. There is a proverb which says haste makes waste. There are phases that you cannot really avoid. [applause]

Dominican Republic

Further on Strike by Teachers, Reaction

More Teachers Join Strike

FL1702231289 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 2201 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] The strike called by the Dominican Teachers Association [ADP] has grown to new proportions with the announcement that teachers from two polytechnical schools and another school directed by religious leaders will join the strike.

In the meantime, ADP Secretary General Prof Rafael Santos Gilbert says that the possibilities for solving the conflict keep getting further away. The trade union leader says that this situation is due to the attitude of intransigence on the part of the Education Secretariat. He considers the education minister a (?hindrance) to any agreement.

In reference to the recent remarks made by [Education Secretary] Lic Pedro Pichardo, the ADP secretary general considered them a provocation. He denied reports that the trade union refused to talk with Lic Pichardo. He said: We are aware that a solution to the conflict escapes the education secretary. He himself said that [words indistinct] the demand of the ADP—President Balaguer!

Prof Santos said that peoples' and (?neighborhood) organizations and the more than 500 private colleges spread throughout the nation will join the strike, primarily in the capital, within the next few hours.

The strike began its 5th day today and the ADP secretary general said that the movement is reaching unexpected levels because they are seeking a way to fight the way in which the education authorities are conducting the conflict. Nevertheless, he said that the radicalization of the movement does not contemplate acts of violence. In general, [words indistinct] teachers' overwhelming actions.

International Union Support

FL1802035989 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 2154 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] The strike that the Dominican Association of Teachers, ADP, began last Monday [13 February] in all the country's public schools continues. Government authorities [word indistinct] members of the teachers' union.

[ADP Secretary General] Prof Rafael Santos said that the stoppage will be evaluated on Monday [20 February] and that the actions that will follow will then be determined. Santos said that the ADP has received the support of the International Trade Union Federation for Education, which represents 10 million teachers throughout the world. He said that he has never [words indistinct] by that entity and he reported that an international solidarity movement has been announced to provide resources to support the strike as long as necessary.

[Begin Santos recording] As of next week, we might be able to pay salaries again. The solidarity of national and international teachers will be demonstrated. We will demonstrate the solidarity of the national and international workers and we will demonstrate the solidarity of the national and international peoples' sectors. In the country, [word indistinct] strike. Anyone who wants to send his support so that the teachers can maintain their strike can do so by contacting our national office, the trade union chapters, [words indistinct]. We are making a special request for medication in case repressive measures are taken against the security of the teachers. We would like special medications for sick teachers. [end recording]

Pichardo To Replace Resigners

FL1802000689 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 2219 GMT 17 Jan 89

[Text] Any teachers who resign one of their jobs in which they receive 275 pesos a month will be replaced by qualified people, Education Secretary Lic Pedro Pichardo has said.

Pichardo said: We do not yet have, nor have we received, the first resignations. Hopefully we will get them on time because we are taking all the teachers that resign off the payroll and we will replace them. We will replace them with qualified people, stressed Pichardo.

The education secretary said that the new teachers will be qualified based on their degrees and their willingness to work. Pichardo said: It's better to have someone who has no teaching degree and wants to teach than to have a person with a teaching degree who does not want to go to class.

Who could oppose it, asked Pichardo, if the president of the Republic decided to appoint someone? Who could oppose that appointment? he said.

The official stressed that the leaders of the ADP can be certain that if the 11,500 teachers resign, they will be replaced, because there are more than enough people to fill their positions. We receive thousands of offers a day from people who want to work for pay, he said. However, Pichardo added, many people say they want to work without pay to substitute for the teachers who do not want to work.

30,000 Reportedly on Strike

FL2202193389 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Approximately 30,000 public school teachers in the Dominican Republic have begun the second week of a nationwide strike for higher pay. President Joaquin Balaguer has said the government cannot afford it but he would consider possible new sources of tax revenue.

Union Willing To Talk

FL2202183889 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1135 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] ADP's secretary general has reiterated that his organization is very willing to hold talks to find a solution to the conflict that has paralyzed the nation's

public schools. Nevertheless, Rafael Santos said that this dialogue would be subject to President Balaguer's express authorization allowing Education Secretary Pedro Pichardo to meet with the leaders of the teachers.

Santos said that teachers are kept living on the edge and their incentive is being taken away from them because of the low salary they receive under the conditions in which they work. Santos then said:

[Begin recording] No one wants (?to adopt) an attitude of (aggression) against Lic Pichardo. I think that he knows that it is impossible to demand quality from teachers as long as a porter and a teacher earn the same salary.

Agreements were signed in November. Those agreements included the points of interest of the teachers, students, parents, and the rest of society. [end recording]

Rafael Santos believes that this situation should be corrected so that Dominican education can take the direction we all want to see:

[Begin recording] There is chaos right now in education. The crisis cannot be resolved by administrative steps. A teacher can begin working today in Monte Cristo and have his paperwork prepared in the school where he works. It takes about 5 or 10 days to get the paperwork to our office. From our office, it can take 15 or more days to arrive at the district office. From the district office, it can take a month for the papers to arrive at the regional office. The paperwork sits at the regional office for 3 or 4 months [words indistinct] so that it does not move. This is a way of not paying those who should get pay. [end recording]

Sosua Municipality 'Paralyzed' by Strike

FL1802032789 Santo Domingo Radio Clarin in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] The municipality of Sosua in Puerto Plata Province awoke this morning with its trade, education, transportation, and industrial sectors paralyzed by a strike. The population of Sosua joined the strike called by community organizations to demand that several projects be fulfilled. The protestors are demanding the repair of a highway that unites Puerto Plata with Sosua and the reconstruction of roads in the municipality.

The irritation felt by the Sosua residents is also in response to the deterioration of the electrical service, which is provided by the Dominican Electricity Corporation at a deficient level. The Committee of Peoples' Organizations of Sosua say that several electrical posts are in very bad shape and that they could collapse at any time.

Hundreds of workers did not show up to their work posts in the trade, industry, and agriculture sectors due to the transportation standstill.

Right now everything is quiet in the streets of the tourist area of this province, where the agents of the Puerto Plata Barracks remain vigilant.

Consulates Express Concern Over Forged Visas

FL2202172089 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1129 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Central American consulates have reacted with alarm to the considerable amount of false visas in the Dominican Republic. Their concern was expressed in a document issued by the consulates of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, and El Salvador. The consuls said there is an organization for the entire country and abroad that produces false identification and documents that are almost perfect. They say that the organization, in falsifying visas, reproduces the signatures of consuls, seals, and even accounting documents.

The note of concern was signed by Consuls C. Hidalgo of Costa Rica, Guadalupe de Franco of El Salvador, Abram Palma of Guatemala, (Viros Laba Rosa de Mota) of Panama, and (Dixie Ana de Brea) of Honduras.

It was reported that the Central American consuls, alarmed by the proliferation of false visas, met with the general director of immigration, (Rafael de Carabai). The consuls explained the situation to the immigration official and stated that they were against an organization that dedicates itself to designing false visas.

German Firm To Rehabilitate Electrical Networks

FL1802023489 Santo Domingo Radio Clarin in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] The president of the Executive Council of the CDE [Dominican Electricity Corporation] has announced that a contract has been signed with a German firm to rehabilitate the electrical networks in the capital. Eng Eduardo Sagredo said that the contract with the (Decon) firm fulfills two requirements for the implementation of the $105 million loan granted by the World Bank to the CDE. Eng Sagredo says that the loan also requires a balancing entry [contrapartida] of 179 million pesos.

The contract with the German firm for the rehabilitation of the electrical networks in the capital was approved during the last session of the CDE Executive Council.

Eng Sagredo said that the project for remodeling the networks is part of the CDE rehabilitation plan, which includes repairing the main plants that produce electricity.

Blackout Program Continues Despite Improvements

FL2202183989 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 22 Feb 89

[All figures as heard]

[Text] The Dominican Electricity Corporation [CDE] has reduced its energy deficit to 75,000 kilowatts. A technician has reported that this is the lowest energy

deficit the CDE has had this year. Despite this level, he said, the scheduled program of blackouts will be maintained. This energy achievement is a result of the (Itado) No 12 plant, which produced 140,000 kilowatts of power while testing its maximum capacity.

The blackout program includes the interruption of 731 hours a day in CDE service from its 172 circuits throughout the country. Nevertheless, the blackouts occur during the heaviest hours of business, trade, and industry, as well as during peak office and education hours. In accordance with the program implemented by the corporation, 306 blackouts occur each day.

'Serious' Lack of Drinking Water in Santiago

FL2202195789 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1147 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Santiago—The scarcity of potable water has once again become a serious problem for residents of Santiago neighborhoods. There has been no drinking water in the principal residential areas of Santiago de Los Caballeros since the shutdown of the Corazal Aqueduct and Sewer Corporation. Residents have confirmed that the urban areas of (Linde), (Casolinas), (Berbudez), and (Sanchez Ramos) have not had water for more than a week.

The manager of the Santiago aqueduct blames the suspension of water service to the blackouts scheduled by the Dominican Electricity Corporation, which have affected the sewage treatment plant.

In the areas most heavily affected by the potable water shortage in Santiago, one can see women and children putting out receptacles to collect water and carrying containers in search of that precious liquid.

Haiti

MPP Leader Denounces 'Group of Thugs'

FL2202161589 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The leaders of the MPP, the Papaye Peasants Movement, held a news conference to give their opinion of recent events. They also talked about the France-Liberte award recently given to MPP leader Chavannes Jean-Baptiste. Mobile Unit 19 was there:

[Mobile 19] [Passage omitted] Chavannes Jean-Baptiste also denounced the formation of a group of thugs, [sans mamans] at the initiative of the Ministry of the Interior, to persecute the peasants of the MPP. [passage omitted including indistinct portions]

They can do what they will, but the struggle to defend peasants rights will have to continue, stressed Jean-Baptiste. [passage omitted]

Jean-Baptiste also announced that an assembly of peasant women will be held soon in Hinche in the central plateau. [passage omitted]

Further on Alleged Commandos

FL2202191289 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, leader of the Papaye Peasants Movement [MPP], last 15 February received from French Prime Minister Michel Rocard an award from the consultative commission for human rights. In a news conference held here in Port-au-Prince yesterday, Jean-Baptiste denounced the danger hanging over the head of the MPP. [passage omitted]

On Tuesday morning, at a news conference at the Holiday Inn [Le Plaza] Hotel, Jean-Baptiste denounced a plot to crush the MPP being set up in the central plateau at the recommendation of the minister of information.

Jean-Baptiste was awarded a big medal and approximately $36,000. The consultative commission is going to send him this money for his work in human rights. [passage omitted]

Eight peasant members of the MPP were also at the speakers table. They were there to explain exactly how their human rights had been violated in 1988. For example, there were 2 women out of the (?28) who had been arrested for refusing to participate in the 17 January 1988 elections. [passage omitted]

According to Jean-Baptiste, peasants who demand their rights are said to be communists. He also said several people had reported to him that the document by Information Minister Tony Virginie Saint-Pierre had begun to be applied. This plot was set up during the week he was in France.

[Begin Jean-Baptiste recording] We found several messages reporting that a commando unit has already been formed—a commando unit that came from Port-au-Prince and is already in the Hinche area to attack and crush the MPP and the MPP people—and that the commando unit is just awaiting the order to strike.

According to our information, in Hinche itself the prefect has already formed a group of thugs [youn ko san maman]. According to our information, there are already 23 people in that group; what's worse, they are paid $100 per month. According to our information, these are groups being set up to crush the MPP, to crush the peasants organizations. And you can be sure that if the prefect is doing it, it came from the Interior Ministry; and if the Interior Ministry is doing it, I don't think it is being done only in Hinche. This is going on.

Since the minister's document had asked that they put in spies, this means that they have begun putting in spies. And it also seems that the money has already been

unblocked—because the minister's document had talked of controlling the young people. It looks as if money has been released so they can begin creating sports things, you see, so that they can support the young people, bring the young people under control, the way Minister Saint-Pierre said. [end recording]

The MPP leader asked all peasants organizations, all political organizations, and the entire Haitian people to rise up and stand beside them [leve-kanpe] when the MPP is hit, so they can all get together and crush the death train.

Further Reaction to Government Forum Reported

FL2202152789 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The cabinet changes just a few hours after the forum's closing ceremony show clearly Prosper Avril's intention [volonte] to govern without taking recommendations into account, says Eddy Volel of the Christian Democratic Assembly [RDC]. Volel feels that the forum has thus resulted in a catastrophe which cannot fail to lead to troubled reactions in Haiti.

[Begin Volel recording, in Creole] We see that Prosper Avril made changes in the cabinet that constitute a hardening of his government's position and which are very dangerous for the future of the nation. We of the RDC say that we are against these changes in the cabinet, for one thing; and besides, we do not acknowledge Prosper Avril's right to do anything in Haiti—except his right to resign. [end recording]

Forum participant Edouard Francisque had a different reaction. He regrets that his point of view regarding the limiting of the powers of the Permanent Electoral Council did not win out. Francisque is also afraid that in the surge of partisan and political passions, there may be new scenes of violence in Haiti.

[Begin Francisque recording] [Passage omitted] The cumulative total of these three powers in a single institution—this regime of confusion of power—is totally undemocratic. [end recording] [passage omitted]

MDN Leader's 'Skepticism' Noted

FL2202151989 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Indecision and skepticism are the principal sentiments noted among the local political class 72 hours after the government forum. Divided over the idea of a colloquy called by General Prosper Avril, the political leaders are still disagreeing on whether or not such an initiative is well founded, despite the fact that the discussions consecrated the need to create an independent institution in charge of organizing the next Haitian elections.

Although the majority of leaders of political parties agree on this latter point, the idea of forming a government of national coalition or unity is not approved of by the majority.

Hubert de Ronceray—whose party, the MDN [Mobilization for National Development], did not participate in the forum—makes four main remarks about these 8 days of discussions at the Legislative Palace:
1. The tautological or superfluous nature of the discussions on the Permanent Electoral Council.
2. The idea of a government of national coalition—or, more specifically, the idea of a common program of government—which De Ronceray thinks is not applicable to the emerging Haitian democracy.
3. The considerable lead taken by the socialists and communists [socialo-communistes] during this forum.
4. Since the forum was not representative of the majority, according to De Ronceray, the forum's conclusions cannot be reached in the name of the national majority. [passage omitted]

De Ronceray also cast doubt on the Avril government's political will to successfully hold free elections in Haiti:

[Begin De Ronceray recording] Actually, it is not that Haiti does not have decent laws. The problem is the men, the leaders, the political will, the commitment by the authorities—it is all these things that Haiti is lacking. Therefore, I myself... [rephrases] we of the MDN do not think the forum is really the miraculous solution to the problems—because, if despite everything there are men who know in advance what is going to happen, (?if) there are men who know in advance what formula must be employed in order to seize [arracher] power, I don't think the forum is really the key to the woes of Haiti.

What is important is the political will on the part of the authorities to organize honest elections. And that is the problem.

So, since the country is angry—the population of the country's nine geographical departments is still angry—and since the situation in Haiti is serious and confused, I, for my part, don't think that the coming weeks are going to be tranquil. On the contrary, I think the situation is deteriorating, and I seriously doubt that anyone can stop this movement of anger that is surging across Haiti. [end recording]

Highway Blocked in Petit Goave 20 Jan

FL2202153689 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Report by Petit Goave correspondent Max A. Metellus]

[Text] Today, Monday 20 January, Petit Goave again awakened to find flaming barricades on National Highway No 2. These barricades contain a number of big trees, which is why vehicles traveling along the south road have had to stop at (Carrefour Andre Dufaix).

Also, the criminal trials that were to have begun at the civil court in Petit Goave today, 20 January, have had to be postponed until Monday 6 March 1989—because the representative of the Department of the Public Prosecutor in Petit Goave, Mr Augustin Romain Ceme, has been appointed minister in the Avril-Heubreux government, after spending 6 months at the head of the office of the Department of the Public Prosecutor at the civil court of Petit Goave. During these 6 months, the person named as Ceme's deputy has never even set foot in the (?office).

The appointment of Mr Ceme—who is from Thomazeau—to the head of the Justice Ministry is causing much talk in political and Justice Department circles in Petit Goave.

This is Max A. Metellus, Radio Soleil, Petit Goave.

Barricades, Demonstrations in Leogane Reported
FL2202154089 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Report by Leogane correspondent Jean Wilfrid Napoleon]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The people of (Carrefour Dufort) have demonstrated. They burned tires and set up barricades on National Highway No 2 to protest a rumor to the effect that the speed bumps they had erected across National Highway No 2 in the (Dufort) area—to make drivers slow down, because too many people are killed by drivers going too fast in the area—were going to be removed.

Indeed, on Saturday night at around 0100 [on 19 February], the police secretly tore down the speed bumps in question. When the population awakened yesterday morning, they found the speed bumps had been removed. This made the population angry and they told the sergeant at the (Dufort) outpost that he had better put up signs immediately along the road with a view to preventing accidents. They said that if he did not, they would be angry, and many things might happen.

This is Jean Wilfrid Napoleon, Radio Soleil, Leogane.

Situation in Central Plateau Reportedly 'Tense'
FL2202154689 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Excerpts] School activity was greatly disturbed yesterday in several provincial towns. In most cases, rumors caused panicky actions.

In Port-de-Paix for example, there was a rumor circulating to the effect that students were going to suffer reprisals from the military because a student had stabbed a teacher—which turned out to be false. Nevertheless, students in Port-de-Paix did not show up for class yesterday morning.

In Hinche, in the central plateau, people threw rocks at a private school, causing panic, and parents hastened to pick up their children.

We point out that things are rather tense right now in the central plateau—ever since the highly contested report from Information Minister Anthony Virginie Saint-Pierre was made public. Also, things have gotten still more tense in the (?upper) central plateau these last few days because of the presence of unidentified men from Port-au-Prince. Members of the MPP, the Papaye Peasants Movement, accuse these individuals of wanting to try to kill MPP coordinator Chavannes Jean-Baptiste.

In Jacmel, rumors of disorders in Port-au-Prince paralyzed activity somewhat yesterday, and schools did not operate as usual yesterday. Public transportation from Jacmel did not begin until around noon yesterday.

There were flaming barricades across National Highway No 2 yesterday at Petit Goave, disturbing traffic and other activities in the region.

There were also flaming barricades in several neighborhoods in Jeremie yesterday. School activity was paralyzed. However, at the end of the day on Monday, Rheto and Philo Class students [the two final classes of secondary school in the Haitian system] decided to go back to school. This morning, the schools have indeed been operating normally in Jeremie, according to our Jeremie correspondent, Ertho Zamor. [passage omitted]

Group Linked to Bosco Massacre Attacks School
FL2202175289 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] The day before yesterday, Monday [20 February], a group of citizens armed with machetes, knives, and all kinds of pointed objects [pik] and wearing red armbands burned all the materials in a school in Labadie, a village very near the town of Petite Riviere de l'Artibonite. This same group had last week sacked that same school, which belongs to the Labadie Youth Movement [MJL]. On that occasion, the men wearing red armbands terrorized the teachers, threatening and chasing both them and the students and forcing them all to rush away from the school. Meanwhile, in Port-au-Prince and other towns, there were soldiers sitting inside schools to provide protection.

But to come back to this fire that they started in the MJL's school, among the people accused of being the arsonists is—according to this same report—a certain (Lates Saintisma), an assistant section chief in the area. There is a warrant out for his arrest because, according to the report, he was involved in the 14 August attack on the young people of Labadie during which four people were killed, under General Henri Namphy's regime.

These young men were killed by an armed commando, with the complicity of the military in the area. To this day not a single one of the killers has been taken to court. They are all continuing to roam around freely without any problem whatsoever in their hometowns.

The last appearance of this armed group wearing red armbands was last 11 September, which would indicate that the these men have branches, proper branches with no worries, established in various parts of Haiti. According to what was said back in September, they are a group that is in favor of the Duvalierists. It was they who attacked the faithful at Saint Jean Bosco Church on the Grand Rue in Port-au-Prince during a mass that was being celebrated by Father Jean Bertrand Aristide. At least 13 people died and 70 were wounded in that incident.

To this day, not a single one of these men who wear red armbands, who are all still roaming around, is in custody; nor is whoever ordered the crime. Former Port-au-Prince Mayor Franck Romain was accused, but Romain received a laissez-passer from the government of General Prosper Avril to go to the Dominican Republic. Gen Henri Namphy, who was in power back then, has also been accused. He too is in the Dominican Republic.

Provincial School Situation Updated
FL2202174089 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] School activity in the provinces has still not resumed its normal rhythm following the wind of panic that swept over the main provincial towns last week and again the day before yesterday.

In Petit Goave, schools remained shut again yesterday. The few students who showed up for class had to return home.

In Cap-Haitien, only two schools were operating yesterday: the one run by the Freres de l'Instruction Chretienne and the one run by the Soeurs of Saint Joseph de Cluny [religious orders]. The Army and the police yesterday issued a joint communique in which they promised to provide security at the schools.

In Hinche in the central plateau, schools operated at a slowdown yesterday. More than half of the primary school students were absent; however, the secondary schools were functioning normally.

In Gonaives, after a tense day on Monday—when there were barricades and flaming tires in the streets—the situation was calm. Schools operated normally.

In Jeremie, too, the schools were operating fully yesterday. The Rheto and Philo Class [last 2 years of secondary school in the Haitian system] protested the day before, in a declaration to the press, this matter of strikes in the schools. They say that these strikes are not based on any serious demands. Meanwhile, everything functions normally in other sectors.

Soldiers Arrest, Beat Citizens in Les Cayes
FL2202193989 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Report by Cayes correspondent Raymond Clerge]

[Excerpts] The military in Les Cayes arrested and beat four citizens in the Nan Savann area, a densely populated section of Les Cayes, on Tuesday 21 January 1989 [date as heard], at around 0200. While the military were patrolling the area, in which tires were burning, these citizens, who say they were unable to sleep because of the heat, had gone out into their yards to catch a breath of fresh air. At that moment, a passing group of soldiers asked the citizens to come tell them who had set the burning tires in the street.

That is how the military came to enter these citizen's yards. [passage omitted] Now one of these citizens is lying in his house unable to get up he was beaten so badly!

The citizens were released at around 1100 that same Tuesday. A Les Cayes military district authority told them: Go on, go away, and never do it again.

We tried to contact the captain from the Les Cayes military district, but he was not there.

Also, the Council of Journalists of the South [Konsey Jounalis Sid la] says it is highly indignant at seeing the hardship the population is undergoing in the four corners of Haiti, especially following the information minister's memorandum. They say that the worst thing is when the government tramples freedom of speech, which is the only thing the population has obtained since 7 February 1986. The council protests the abuses committed against journalists on 15 February. They also protest the brigandage and arrests of citizens going on in the four corners of Haiti. They support outright all popular protests in favor liberating Haiti. They say: Long live the Haitian people's struggle. Long live freedom of the press.

This is Raymond Clerge, Radio Soleil, in Les Cayes.

International Anti-Apartheid Delegation Visits
FL2202171489 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] An international antiapartheid delegation made up of a representative of the international students union, a representative of students organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean, and a representative of the African National Congress has been visiting Haiti

since Saturday, within the framework of a Caribbean mobilization against the apartheid movement, which is a movement of discrimination.

The delegation is to meet with an assembly made up of the FENEH [National Federation of Haitian Students] executive committee and leaders of the major human rights organizations.

The delegation is also going to make statements to press organs in Haiti.

Funeral Service for Accident Victims Announced
FL2202163889 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] There will be a symbolic funeral service next Saturday for 48 compatriots killed last 27 January in a highway accident in the Dominican Republic. This ceremony will take place at Saint Jean Bosco Church on the Grande Rue at 1500 at the initiative of the young people of Saint Jean Bosco Church.

El Salvador

Reaction to FMLN Meeting, Proposal in Mexico

Meeting Termed 'Positive'

PA2202215689 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1955 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] At the conclusion of the meeting held in Oaxtepec, Morelos State between representatives of the Salvadoran political parties and the FMLN, it was jointly agreed that the political parties will consider the FMLN proposal as a whole and will contribute in whatever way necessary to help the peace effort as long as the Executive and Legislative Branches agree to make the achievement of the proposal's content a reality. It was also decided that they will immediately and urgently work to arrange a meeting between the Salvadoran Government and the FMLN with the political parties also participating.

This morning, the participants in the Oaxtepec dialogue met with Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana to brief him on what they had agreed upon and to thank him for the Mexican Government's provision of facilities. The FMLN later held a news conference in which it described the meeting's results as positive and pointed out that the government must now make its decision.

Statement to Government

PA2202215189 Paris AFP in Spanish 2034 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Mexico City, 22 Feb (AFP)—Salvadoran guerrilla leaders today said that a negative response to their peace proposals by the Salvadoran Government would be equivalent to "a declaration of war," which would intensify a conflict that has already resulted in some 70,000 deaths.

Roberto Roca and Jorge Shafik Handal said in a news conference that, after their meetings on Monday and Tuesday with leaders of 13 Salvadoran political parties at a resort in Oaxtepec, it is up to the Armed Forces and the government to present their position.

The FMLN General Command has proposed the appointment of an independent provisional president, the creation of three multiparty commissions, and a 5-month postponement of the 19 March presidential elections. In exchange, the insurgents say they would lay down their weapons forever.

At the end of the meetings in Oaxtepec, the party representatives agreed to analyze the proposal as a group and to try to promote a dialogue between the government and the FMLN.

Roca said: "We will insist until 19 March that the political parties honor their commitment and that negotiations are held."

He added: "If the Armed Forces close their doors, it would be equivalent to a declaration of war. It would mean that they are exerting themselves to continue the war, and we will obviously react accordingly."

Roca stated that the FMLN is not "making any threats; however, the FMLN has to respond to an escalation of the war, even though this is not a step we would like to take."

Meanwhile, Handal said that "if the Armed Forces take it upon themselves to close their doors, we will have to assume that behind that move lies a determination to choose another alternative" instead of peace.

He warned that "if the military steps up its efforts, this will precipitate an escalation of the war."

Handal added: "We have not issued any ultimatums. We have not said that we will punish the government if it does not agree to negotiate. Yet if we put our weapons aside unilaterally, there will be a tremendous massacre. We will not commit suicide, nor will we allow the people to be murdered."

"The price of ending the war is accepting a democratic process. It would be fitting for the Armed Forces to become an organization that serves civilian society."

'Position Statement' Issued

PA2302010789 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 2315 GMT 22 Feb 89

[FMLN "position statement" on the implementation of the FMLN elections proposal; dated 18 February—place not given]

[Text] Our proposal to turn the elections into a contribution to peace has created intense national debate and great expectations regarding the possibility of a definitive end to the war. Within this framework, concerns have been expressed about the scope of our proposal and how a definitive end to the armed struggle can be achieved through it. Our proposal constitutes a first step in seeking agreements and in creating conditions that will make the path to peace irreversible. To respond to these concerns and to continue to advance the peace process, the FMLN is willing to take the necessary steps to achieve a definitive end to the war. With this in mind, the FMLN wishes to express the following considerations:

1. There are as yet no winners or losers in this war; therefore, it is illogical and unrealistic to expect any of the sides to agree to surrender. The belief that the FMLN will surrender does not take into account the current level of our forces or the fact that the causes that gave rise to the war still exist.

2. The FMLN took up weapons and still takes up weapons, because in our country there is no real justice or democracy. Our peace proposal seeks to create opportunities so that these objectives can become a reality through peaceful means by clearly dedicating our Armed Forces to this goal so that the country can be put on the road to lasting peace.

Based on the previous considerations and to respond to the questions raised by various sectors, our front, making its positions much more flexible and taking new steps and removing obstacles, states that it is willing to:

1. Definitively halt the armed struggle.

2. Join the country's political life.

3. Recognize the existence of a single army, as long as within the framework of the agreements on the implementation of our peace proposal an agreement is reached with the government and the Armed Forces to guarantee that the Armed Forces will become an authentically professional entity at the service of democracy and the defense of national sovereignty.

This is contingent on the following points:

1. Trial and punishment of those responsible for historic, irrational, and unjustifiable massacres and political crimes that have been the cause of war, such as the assassination of Msgr Romero, the four U.S. nuns, and the FDR leaders, and the slaughters of El Mozote in Morazan Department, Rio Sumpul in Chalatenango Department, Las Hojas in Sonsonate Department, and many other incidents that served to escalate the war. As long as this is not solved and those responsible for these crimes go unpunished and are protected by the judicial system, there can be no guarantees for real democratic life.

2. A reduction in force of the Armed Forces to the number of men, approximately 12,000 troops, and the quantity of equipment it had in 1978. This measure will curtail the nation's militarization, improve civilian life, and reduce military expenditures. Moreover, from a geopolitical standpoint, it will contribute to the region's demilitarization. The Army has not only been an element of real power, but its power has been considerably augmented. To secure democracy, therefore, their forces and political strength must be reduced, thus guaranteeing their obedience to the civilian authorities elected by the people.

3. The dissolution of the current security forces, National Police, National Guard, and Treasury Police, to restructure them into a single professional public security body, adequately armed for its functions, which must be controlled and directed by the Interior Ministry and not by the Armed Forces.

The current security forces are true centers of torture and terror that do not respect human rights and existing laws. An atmosphere of peace would allow the implementation of economic measures that would secure work or lands for the demobilized troops.

It is evident that truly free elections—as we are proposing for 15 September—and an agreement on the three points stated here, would create truly democratic conditions, eliminate the causes that led to the armed struggle, and allow the peaceful achievement of the large-scale transformation the country requires to achieve social justice. If this political agreement is reached, and if it is fulfilled, the FMLN will end its armed struggle and will fully join political life. Under current conditions, the reign of terror has prevailed, and it would be suicidal to end the armed struggle. This goes not only for the FMLN but for many of the labor, religious, mass, and political organizations with various ideologies that are currently active in national life.

The FMLN expresses its willingness to discuss these points immediately so that, in addition to implementing the proposal to make the elections a contribution to peace, we can end the war.
[Signed] Commanders Ferman Cienfuegos, Roberto Roca, Shafik Jorge Handal, Leonel Gonzalez, and Joaquin Villalobos
[Dated] 18 February 1989

Commentary to Political Parties

PA2202134689 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Station Commentary: "The Realistic Peace Proposal Must Not Be Rejected"]

[TEXT] The talks between representatives of 13 Salvadoran political parties and the FMLN General Command will begin in Mexico City on 20 February.

At the parties' request, these talks will focus on details of the FMLN peace proposal that merit a more thorough explanation.

Unfortunately, the hopes that this meeting will end with specific steps toward peace have been significantly affected by statements by Armed Forces and ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] spokesmen who have already decided, irrationally and inflexibly, that no agreements can be reached because the political parties have no decisionmaking power.

If the proposal and the meeting do not make any progress, it will be because the Armed Forces—that is, La Tandona [referring to officers of the 1966 graduating class of the Capt Gen Gerardo Barrios Military School]—and ARENA do not want to face reality, which demands a negotiated solution to the conflict.

The FMLN proposal is a realistic proposal. Many have even described it as a new, firm step in a process that will culminate in an end to the war.

To reactionaries such as those in ARENA, however, it seems that the meeting with the FMLN is an excuse to continue delaying tactics instead of giving the mature response people are demanding to this realistic option for peace.

The people are focusing their attention on this latest turn of events. The country's mass, democratic movement agrees that rejecting this proposal will not only prolong but will intensify the war.

The workers, the public employees, the displaced persons, the jobless, and the cooperative members have vehemently explained their problems: hunger, meager salaries, repression, bombings, and dismissals. They have outlined an unbearable social reality that threatens to prompt a explosion throughout society. This explosion will be caused by the intransigence and shortsightedness of those who do not want to heed the FMLN's call to make the elections a true instrument for peace.

There are urgent needs. A crisis is under way. A war is under way. There is also a new, attractive, and realistic proposal to stop the war. The FMLN proposal is the most tangible expression of our political resolve to guide the country toward democracy and peace with justice.

It was said that we were afraid to participate in the elections. We have never been afraid of the people's decision. But we do not want to participate in a farce, an election fraud, that can only serve to continue a long history of powerful classes entrenched in power.

The proposal is realistic because the elections would become a way for the people to choose a new government that would be recognized by the FMLN. Once this happens, we can irreversibly begin the path to democratization and to ending the war.

Bishop Rosa Chavez Comments

PA2202150289 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Interview with Msgr Gregorio Rosa Chavez, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, by unidentified reporters on 19 February; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Rosa Chavez] We hope the FMLN proposal will receive more support, not only because it is interesting, but because it is becoming feasible. We need actions, not just words. Violence must be stopped. The church's stand on this is very clear. The options that have been created give us hope for peace.

[Reporter] The guerrillas have proposed changing the date of the elections. Some of the political parties going to the meeting in Mexico will defend the 19 March date, while others feel it is feasible to hold elections on 15 September. That is the point to be discussed in Mexico. What does the church think about postponing the elections?

[Rosa Chavez] I think that is the easiest point of the entire proposal. I believe that would be very simple, but some other points in the proposal are unclear. I think the entire country would support changing the election date if the people were sure that the war would end after 15 September. That is the point we want to emphasize. How can we guarantee that, by changing the election date, the war will end on 15 September? If the war would end by changing the election date, I assure you that not only just a few, but the vast majority of political parties would say: Of course, let's change the date. The key point is: How do we ensure that by changing the election date—which is the rebels' main demand—the war would end?

There is a problem of distrust, because after so many promises by all sides, people are skeptical—they see traps everywhere. We must overcome this attitude. Therefore, [words indistinct] something as simple as changing the date of the elections, the country would find peace. But we must all work to achieve this. We must therefore work so these commitments will result in a feasible proposal that will truly end the conflict. The election date is less important than ending the war. But the way things stand, the date could be changed, and the war would still continue.

[Reporter] Would [word indistinct] a new attitude, a change in the Armed Forces General Staff [words indistinct]?

[Rosa Chavez] The way we see it, the Mexico meeting is just a phase or stage in the entire process. It is a stage in which we hope we will make some progress by clarifying things. But then, how about the level of commitments, there being [words indistinct] the FMLN document itself says so when it says: The political parties are not the centers of power. This means that even though the FMLN is working with the political parties, the proposal should be discussed at another level, which is not the political parties. I feel that the most important commitments will be made at other levels. That is why the Mexico meeting is a stage in the process. If the politicians keep this option alive and reach an agreement, they will have done a great service to the nation.

The politicians alone are not the solution, however. All groups must be incorporated into the peace process, and the groups that have suffered the most are the ones that can contribute the most. This must be a very serious process. I believe it is possible to find a solution, but only if all of us contribute to it. That is why we believe the FMLN proposal must be discussed.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Rosa Chavez] As this is an intermediate phase, there is no need for church mediation. Perhaps at a more decisive moment, the participants themselves will ask for the church to participate in the talks. We are not needed at this stage. I would say this is an exploratory stage.

San Salvador Office Destroyed; Metapan Attacked
PA2202130189 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1214 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Report by Carlos Alberto Osorio]

[Text] The San Salvador offices of the Salvadoran Workers National Union Federation, FENASTRAS, were destroyed between 0415 and 0430 today. There were no casualties.

The town of Metapan was an inferno from last night until dawn. Between 2330 and 0300, rebel forces attacked Metapan. It was a scene from hell: Bombs were exploding, and submachineguns and weapons of all calibers were fired at the Metapan garrison.

People reappeared a few minutes ago on the streets of Metapan, about 20 km north of Santa Ana Department. Our correspondents are trying to learn how much damage was caused by this attack, which kept residents of this town awake until dawn today.

Rebel Killed in Metapan
PA2202141989 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1320 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] We have a detailed and confirmed report on the incidents that took place in the town of Metapan, northern Santa Ana Department, between late last night and early this morning.

FMLN rebels harassed military positions in Metapan from 2330 until 0300. According to civilian sources in Metapan, this was one of the biggest FMLN attacks on Metapan.

A National Police checkpoint at the main entrance to Metapan was attacked first, and a Texaco gas station in the same area was simultaneously destroyed by bombs.

Our report says heavy shooting and explosions were heard throughout the night. According to our report, the local Army garrison and National and Treasury Police posts were also attacked. Houses near the garrison and the Civil Defense building were damaged.

ASTTEL [Association of Salvadoran Telecommunication Workers] confirmed that some switches and two 46,000-volt power lines were damaged by the rebels, leaving Metapan and some areas in northern Santa Ana Department without electricity.

In addition, it was reported that at 0600 today, FMLN rebels placed barricades on the road to Metapan near the Casitas area, causing a traffic jam. According to our reports, soldiers removed the barricades at around 0700.

It was also confirmed that one guerrilla was killed during the attack on Metapan this morning. The rebel's body was found 50 meters from the local garrison. It was also reported that one civilian was wounded during the FMLN attack.

FMLN Attacks 6th Infantry Brigade in Usulutan
PA1702154689 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1730 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Report by Javier Najarro]

[Text] The FMLN attacked the garrison of the Salvadoran Army's 6th Infantry Brigade and Atonal Battalion in Usulutan City, Usulutan Department, at approximately 1100 today. The rebels used catapults to launch bombs at the garrison.

According to preliminary reports, two bombs struck houses near the 6th Infantry Brigade garrison. The houses were seriously damaged, and six unidentified people were wounded.

The other bombs fell inside the 6th Infantry Brigade garrison, but they did not go off. Because of strict security measures, we were not allowed in the garrison. The 6th Infantry Brigade has cordoned off the area.

Guerrilla Attacks Result in Power Outages
PA2202164289 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1558 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] San Salvador, 22 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Approximately 60 percent of Salvadoran territory was in the dark at daybreak today because of guerrilla attacks against 11 powerlines throughout the country, a spokesman for the Lempa River Hydroelectric Executive Commission (CEL) has said.

CEL official Orlando Quiteno told ACAN-EFE that to compensate for the power shortage, the Soyapango diesel plants, east of San Salvador, have been turned on, which costs CEL about $80,000 a day to operate.

Two of the Salvadoran hydroelectric plants, Cerron Grande and 5 November, were isolated following the guerrilla attacks that have taken place in the last few hours.

The power outage, which includes several large cities in the country, lasted from midnight to midmorning today, causing traffic jams and a delay in national production.

Quiteno did not specify the duration of the power outage, which has forced CEL to ration electric power in the different departments of the country.

Official spokesmen said that in the last few hours, urban guerrillas detonated explosive devices at five electric towers in different parts of the capital.

Comparison of Venceremos Reports Proposal
PA2302034989

(Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador at 2332 GMT on 22 February broadcasts the FMLN proposal presented in Mexico and signed by the FMLN General Command in El Salvador on 20 February. The Radio Farabundo Marti version has been compared to the Radio Venceremos version published in the 22 February Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 26, and found to be identical, with the following exceptions:

page 26, column two, paragraph three, only sentence, Radio Farabundo Marti version reads: ...three working commissions: [new paragraph]

A. A commission to...(providing outline format)

page 26, column two, paragraph four, last sentence, Radio Farabundo Marti version reads: ...from voting areas. The problem faced by mayors would also be included in this commission's agenda. [new paragraph]

B. A commission to establish the juridical and political aspects of a reform to the electoral law. The commission's agenda would include the following issues:

1. the electoral code;

2. the voters' registry;

3. the reorganization of the central electoral council;

4. the creation of a supervisory organization;

5. international supervision of the elections; and

6. use of the media. [new paragraph]

C. A commission to handle issues relating to international...(supplying outline format, rewording)

page 26, column two, third paragraph from bottom, Radio Farabundo Marti version reads: ...3. Commissions' working period: [new paragraph]

A. The FMLN proposes...(rewording)

Correction to Venceremos Reports FMLN Proposal
PA2302034589

The following correction pertains to the item subheaded "Venceremos Reports Proposal," published in the 22 February Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 26:

page 26, column two, paragraph four, last sentence make read: ...from voting areas; the mayors' problem. [new paragraph]

—A commission to establish the juridical...(establishing new paragraphs)

page 26, column two, paragraph six, second sentence make read: ...of the media. [new paragraph]

—A commission to handle issues relating to...(establishing new paragraphs)

page 26, column two, fourth paragraph from bottom, sentence two make read: ...to the government and, therefore, the Armed Forces and the Legislative Assembly's necessary participation in the negotiations...(rewording)

page 27, column one, paragraph six, only sentence make read: ...president be appointed by the Legislative Assembly with the approval...(adding "by the Legislative Assembly")

Honduras

Anti-U.S. Group Claims Responsibility for Attacks
PA2202201489 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 1933 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 22 Feb (REUTER)—According to an anonymous telephone call made to a local radio station, an anti-U.S. guerrilla group has claimed responsibility for three attacks in Honduras over the last few days. Thirteen people were wounded in the attacks.

"We, the Revolutionary United Front Movement [Movimiento Frente Unido Revolucionario], claim responsibility for the attacks, which are a protest against Yankee imperialism," the caller told the HRN radio station Tuesday night.

The police said this was the first time they had heard of the Revolutionary United Front Movement.

A bomb exploded at the Tegucigalpa Municipality offices last night, wounding eight people and causing damage estimated at over $1 million. On Saturday, a bomb attack in the central city of Comayagua, 80 km north of Tegucigalpa, injured five people, including three U.S. soldiers. On Monday night, a bomb exploded in another government office in Tegucigalpa, but no one was injured.

"We want the Yankee troops to leave this country," said the caller, who added that the group is not planning more attacks. There was no way to check the caller's identity or to determine if there is a link between the Tegucigalpa attacks and the United States.

Lieutenant Gustavo Dominguez, a police spokesman, said that no arrests had been made in last night's attacks and that the police would study a recording of the call. Five people were detained for a short time following Monday night's bombing.

Meanwhile, Congress today discussed legal reforms that would allow the Armed Forces to patrol the streets along with the 5,000 policemen to counter a recent wave of attacks and violence. Last month, gunmen assassinated Gustavo Alvarez, former Armed Forces commander; a top Nicaraguan rebel leader; and the lawyer of an alleged drug trafficker.

"The country needs the Army to support the police, because the wave of terrorism we are facing cannot go on," Armed Forces spokesman Juan Sierra said.

Opposition legislators said that to give the Armed Forces greater power would be equivalent to imposing a state of emergency.

The Armed Forces have repeatedly denied they want greater power. Armed Forces Commander General Humberto Regalado last week rejected remarks by CIA Director William Webster, who said military coups were being planned in Honduras.

Gen Regalado Comments on Security Situation
PA2202173189 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Report by Jose Danilo Izaguirre]

[Text] General Humberto Regalado Hernandez, commander in chief of the Honduran Armed Forces, has said the military is waiting for the National Congress to pass amendments to the law that established the Armed Forces. Speaking last night, 1 hour after a dynamite attack on the Tegucigalpa Municipality's administrative building, Regalado added: Once these amendments are passed, we will deploy soldiers in the streets to protect the Honduran people's peace and security.

In Gen Regalado's opinion, the recent violent incidents are a response to the upcoming fifth meeting of EEC, Contadora Group, and Central American foreign ministers in San Pedro Sula. In other words, he said, the groups involved in these activities aim to disrupt our democratic system. Gen Regalado believes all Hondurans must look after the country's security, because this is a responsibility of all professional, labor, and peasant groups.

He also believes that a broad national dialogue is necessary and should take place as soon as possible. However, Gen Regalado also believes that everyone must cooperate by reporting on suspicious people or groups. Of course, he added, an investigation would be held to determine the innocence or guilt of those accused of involvement in these violent incidents.

Gen Regalado said the military is only waiting for amendments to the law that established the Honduran Armed Forces to be passed. Once that happens, he said, soldiers will be deployed in the streets and will work with the Public Security Forces [FUSEP] because, as we all know, the FUSEP alone is not capable of guaranteeing the Honduran people's security.

Regalado said he regrets and is concerned about the violent incidents that occurred over the past few days. In his opinion, these incidents are the result of an attempt to ruin our country's image before the San Pedro Sula meeting. According to Regalado, this plan has backfired on those involved.

Communist Leader Assails U.S. Maneuvers
PA2002141689 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Interview with Rigoberto Padilla, secretary general of the Communist Party of Honduras, by Estrella Diaz; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Diaz] What is the opinion of the Communist Party of Honduras [PCH] on Honduras' economic dependence on the United States?

[Padilla] Honduras depends on the United States to such an extent that one can say that over 80 percent of the large firms in Honduras have been created with U.S. capital. To this dependence one must now add the economic policy pursued by the administrations of former President Roberto Suazo Cordoba and current President Jose Azcona Hoyos, which is subjected to dictates from the IMF and AID. This dependence is so great that AID is described as a sort of second government in Honduras because it defrays around 34 percent of the national budget with alleged economic aid. This gives this international organization enormous decision-making power.

The economic dependence and the application of IMF and AID policies have thus far been a catastrophe for Honduras, clearly resulting in mass unemployment, which sometimes reaches truly alarming figures. I can assert to you that close to 900,000 Hondurans—that is, virtually 1 million Hondurans out of a population of 4.5 million—are jobless or endure the effects of unemployment. Crime has increased. The high cost of living has become truly alarming during the last few months. The prices of consumer goods have tripled and the national currency, which was touted as a strong currency because its parity was 2 lempiras to $1, is now practically on the verge of becoming worthless; it has been devalued, in fact.

[Diaz] Padilla, new joint Honduran-U.S. maneuvers were begun a short time ago; therefore, the presence of U.S. Marines has increased. I think it would be worthwhile for you, as PCH secretary general, to talk to us about this matter and the corresponding danger this U.S. military presence poses to Honduras and other countries in the region.

[Padilla] Our party and other revolutionary forces in Honduras—and not only them but all earnest and patriotic forces in our country, including the Catholic Church and, as far as we know, some sectors in the Honduran Army—have been insisting on an end to these types of maneuvers. These maneuvers are held with different names, like Ahuas Tara-1 and Ahuas Tara-2, and even the names of some forefathers have been suggested: Cabanas-1, Cabanas-2, and Terencio Sierra-89, which practically has a counterinsurgency nature.

What could be the reason for holding these so-called joint military maneuvers and making parachute landings 20 km from the Nicaraguan border and El Salvador? Obviously somebody is being threatened, and it is not only the Central American peoples who have rebelled against the imperialist domination. These maneuvers are a preventive war against our own peoples, like those called Terencio Sierra-89. Otherwise what explanation is there for their dropping airborne troops in the northern department of Yoro, for example? This is aimed at alleged guerrilla activities, which represent nothing but our people's logical and natural resistance to the presence of foreign occupiers on our soil.

[Diaz] We thank you, Rigoberto Padilla, PCH secretary general, for making these statements to Radio Havana.

Armed Forces Officer on 'Rumors' of Coup

PA1702163589 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Interview with Colonel Manuel Enrique Suarez Benavides, public relations director of the Armed Forces, by Jose Danilo Izaquirre; date and place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Izaguirre] In view of coup d'etat rumors in Honduras directly or indirectly linking the Honduran Armed Forces—because without arms there is no coup d'etat—and some politicians and businessmen, which prompted the National Congress to establish a commission to conduct an investigation, we have consulted Colonel Manuel Enrique Suarez Benavides, public relations director of the Honduran Armed Forces:

[Suarez] We have been categorical toward the issue of the violation of the Constitution. Specifically, our commander in chief has said the Armed Forces are responsible for guaranteeing respect for the Honduran Constitution and laws. He added that the Armed Forces are also guarantors of the democratic process Honduras has and will hopefully continue to enjoy. Our commander said the Armed Forces would not participate in any activity that would disturb the system.

Quite the contrary, all our institution's activities, which are not simply words but actions, are implemented on a daily basis by various organizations in the country with which we meet to discuss various issues. In those meetings, we insist the Armed Forces will fulfill its constitutional duty, continue to be respectful and guarantee protection, and above all, maintain its firm support for the drafting of plans implemented within the democratic process, which is difficult to achieve in other Central American countries. Fortunately, in Honduras, democracy is being respected within a framework of guarantees and security to allow all Hondurans to get involved and attain positions through a political struggle free of attachments while respecting the Honduran state's law and commitments abroad, not only with Central America, but with other world countries, as mandated by international treaties.

[Izaguirre] Col Suarez, a direct or indirect intervention by the Armed Forces through a coup d'etat at this moment could be lethal...

[Suarez, interrupting] We do not really wish to comment further on this, because we have a defined position and would not allow foreign influence to alter our resolve expressed by our commander in chief, who is directly responsible for the institution, and several officers who share these ideas of (?our top) leadership. We will refrain from making statements that might create uneasiness or reactions from certain segments that are again distorting or misinterpreting statements made by top Armed Forces leaders.

[Izaguirre] This means the Armed Forces would positively not attempt a coup d'etat?

[Suarez] There will be no coup d'etat by the Armed Forces. [passage omitted]

Army Plans To Reinforce Police Patrols

PA1702193089 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2017 GMT 13 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 13 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—General Humberto Regalado, chief of the Honduran Armed Forces, announced today in Tegucigalpa that combat troops will reinforce police patrols in urban and rural areas over the next several weeks.

The military chief said soldiers from various units will receive special urban patrol training so they can join the police force, because according to the police, there are not enough policemen to maintain order.

According to Regalado, the Honduran high command's decision responds to "the people's demand that combat troops join the police to maintain order, especially in cities such as Tegucigalpa, which are constantly growing."

Regalado did not specify the number of troops that will be patrolling the streets, but it has been estimated to maintain order in Tegucigalpa, at least 1,200 troops must join approximately 300 policemen.

Italy Offers $15 Million in Aid to Peasants

PA1702231989 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 15 Feb 89 p 9

[Summary] San Pedro Sula—Jose Hipp, regional director of the National Agrarian Institute (INA), has announced here that the Italian Government offered the INA $15 million to implement an integrated production program that will benefit at least 120 peasant groups.

Hipp explained that the government is seeking to provide guidance to peasants so they will be able to make the best use of this financial assistance to increase productivity.

* 1989 Budget Approved by National Congress

* Few Changes Made

32480063a

[Editorial Report] San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish on 19 December reports on page 8 that "the National Congress has approved the central government budget for fiscal year 1989." The total budget remained unchanged, although funds for certain branches were increased while other branches received cuts. For example: funding for the Legislative Branch and the Electoral Organization was increased, respectively, to 27.98 million and 36 million lempiras (from 23.7 and 22 million lempiras); while funding for the Presidency and Public Credit and Finance was reduced to 19 million and 40.95 million lempiras, respectively (from 22.19 and 44.05 million lempiras).

* Original Budget

32480063a San Pedro Sula TIEMPO ('Martes Financiero' Supplement) in Spanish 6 Dec 88 p 1

[Text] Either this week or next, the National Congress will have to approve (with some changes) the state revenue and expenditures budget bill for next year, which has been requested by the Executive Branch based on 2.17886 billion lempiras, 156 million more than the amount authorized for this year.

The largest item in the new budget bill is still that allocated for payment of the public debt (651 million); followed by education (435 million), public health (264 million), and SECOPT [Secretariat of Communications, Public Works, and Transport], which will absorb 195 million.

The one that has caused the greatest controversy is unquestionably that earmarked for the armed forces. The fact is that, although the executive branch has recommended for next year keeping it static at 150 million lempiras (the same sum received this year), the amount is still considered "excessive" for a country that has proven incapable of surmounting the distressing social indexes that continue to beset the vast majority severely. The most unexpected statistics result from a brief comparison between the budget allocated for defense and public security for 1989 and those for other state areas: It is 25 times larger than that recommended for culture and tourism, 6 times higher than that for foreign affairs, and exceeds that for natural resources by 43 million (despite the fact that this is a preeminently agricultural country). And, with it, the civil service system of the Legislative and Judicial Branches and the Presidency of the Republic could be totally supported, with even a surplus of 80 million, over half, available for investment in other sectors.

Although the budget program prepared for the armed institution for next year, which the deputies will have to review and approve during the first few days of December, has no detailed explanations, it does specify that, of the 150 million recommended, 144.2 million should be spent on the armed forces operation, with 5 million allocated for the Public Security Force, FUSEP; 310,000 lempiras for the operation of the Military Pension Institute; and 410,000 lempiras to be used by the Engineers Battalion.

In 1987, the armed forces posted expenditures of 135 million lempiras, and, for 1988, with no great inconvenience, the Legislative Branch approved an increase of 15 million lempiras for them.

	Approved 1988	Requested 1989
Legislative Branch	27,725.1	23,727.1
Judicial Branch	22,260	24,500
Electoral Agency	20,000	22,000
Executive Branch		
Presidency of the Republic	14,568.3	22,186.6
Interior and Justice	32,426.9	32,829.7
Foreign Affairs	22,460.3	24,187.1
Defense and Public Security	150,000	150,000
Economy and Commerce	16,192.9	14,897.5
Finance and Public Credit	40,925.5	44,046.8
Attorney General's Office	1,654.2	1,654.2
Public Education	402,872.5	435,336.8

	Approved 1988	Requested 1989
Legislative Branch	27,725.1	23,727.1
Public Health	233,983.5	264,181.0
Culture and Tourism	6,376.6	6,375.0
Labor and Social Security	25,511.6	29,083.6
Communications, Public Works, and Transport	188,379.7	195,345.9
Natural Resources	101,654.7	106,659.3
Planning, Coordination, and Budget	21,480.8	17,965.7
Public Debt	616,971.3	651,313.4
Centralized Public Spending Services	70,161.9	105,596.5
Totals	2,015,605.8	2,171,886.8

* Large Deficit Forecast

32480063a San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 6 Dec 88 p 8

[Text] Tegucigalpa—The National Congress' economic advisor, Gustavo Alfaro, announced that a fiscal deficit in the millions was approved in next year's budget of the nation without financing, since it failed to include a group of assets pledged by the government.

At the same time, the official estimated that, during 1989, the social demands will be greater because it is a political year, adding that a national agreement must be promoted with all sectors, to make the decisions that the Honduran economy requires; otherwise, the next government will encounter an extremely difficult situation that will force it to enact far more drastic adjustment measures than could be implemented at present.

The former economy minister noted that the unfinanced fiscal deficit incorporated into the budget exceeds 300 million lempiras, as a result of certain assets pledged by the current administration.

According to Alfaro, there are four fundamental problems in the Honduran crisis: the fiscal deficit, the balance of payments, unemployment, and the lack of both public and private investment.

He added that, after making an analysis aimed at reducing public spending, it is difficult to achieve this with the government's fixed expenses.

Alfaro remarked: "Of the fixed expenses, 32 percent is payments, 31 percent is for the public debt, and 15 percent relates to transfers made to the National Autonomous University of Honduras, with an additional percentage given to other institutions, making a total of 85.4 percent; so, there can hardly be a reduction there."

On the other hand, he indicated that 14.6 percent of the budget is appropriated for investment and operating expenses; after pointing out that a slight reduction could be made in this area, but not by an index that might bring public administration to a standstill.

As for the balance of payments, he claimed that, although it is true that coffee prices have improved during recent months, this does not offset the structure of the national production, which has a large imported component. Hence, more dollars are always required to import than are generated by the imports.

He subsequently predicted that during 1989 the crisis could become worse, inasmuch as it is a political year. He cited as an example the fact that, a few months before the 1985 general elections, the Employed Physician Statute was approved, even though its economic consequences had been gauged.

The National Congress' economic advisor predicted: "Hence, we cannot preclude the possibility that, next year, since it is preeminently political, all the parties will agree to approve the Teachers Statute, disregarding the fact that this will have serious implications for public finances."

He then remarked that the labor sector would exert pressure for larger wage hikes, because the inflation rate has shot up during the past few months.

Next, Alfaro claimed that there are only two options for reducing the fiscal deficit, namely: a cut in fixed expenses, and an improvement in fiscal revenue.

He explained: "Courageous decisions must be made to reduce fixed expenditures, although I have always considered this difficult; whereas, the improvement of fiscal revenue can be achieved in two ways, namely: the creation of new taxes, and the procurement of current revenue with forceful measures to eradicate contraband and eliminate tax fraud and failure to pay certain taxes to cover the already existing debts."

Finally, he remarked that the 10 percent reduction in current spending advocated by the Executive Branch, in a special decree, would not have the effect that it should have on the magnitude of the current economic crisis.

* Decentralized Institutions' Budget Published

32480063b Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 28 Sep 88 p 5

[Text] The budgets of the decentralized institutions for 1989 exceed the General Revenue and Disbursements Budget of the Nation for the same period by nearly 234 million lempiras.

The total for the decentralized entities' budgets amounts to 2,405,516,800 lempiras, whereas the central government's budget is 2,171,886,000 lempiras, based on the decisions handed down by the Secretariat of Planning, Coordination, and Budget (SECPLAN).

The largest of those budgets relates to the National Enterprise for Electric Power (ENEE), with 628.2 million lempiras, most of it allocated for the payment of debts contracted for the construction of the El Cajon hydroelectric dam.

According to the statements made by the SECPLAN officials, in making the respective decisions account was taken of the economic and social policy, administrative aspects, and the measures ordered by the Executive Branch in the area of public spending.

SECPLAN claims: "The programming made entails the annual implementation of the objectives and goals contained in the National Development Plan, incorporating additional elements that will make it possible to progress in linking the programming with the budget, so that the spending efforts will be directed strictly toward fulfillment of the national objectives." It adds that, for every public enterprise, the recovery and consolidation of guidelines for business conduct constitute the main core of the efforts initiated; since this represents a longer term task, its implementation is possible only in consecutive phases that will put self-supported improvement processes in motion.

SECPLAN maintains that, in the budget decisions, consideration was given to the maintenance of macroeconomic stability, introducing adjustments represented by a cut of approximately 10 percent in current spending compared with the amount requested by the institutions, and a 0.4 percent increase in real investment, compared with the 1988 period.

As for the public sector's nonfinancial overall deficit with respect to the GDP [gross domestic product], a 3.8 percent index has been programmed for 1989, 2 percent lower than that estimated for 1988.

Some of the institutions harshly criticized for the large size of their budgets and the ineffectiveness that they have actually shown will continue to have large sums available next year, judging from the decisions made public yesterday.

Prominent among these are CONADI [National Corporation for Investment] (57.7 million lempiras); COHDEFOR [Honduran Corporation for Forest Development] (52.2 million; INVA [not further identified] (36.5 million); IHCAFE [Honduran Coffee Institute] (43.7 million); and BANSUPRO [not further identified] (32 million).

Secretariat of Planning, Coordination and Budget Decentralized Institutions 1988 Budget

Institutions	Total
Financing Enterprises	660,170.3
BCH [not further identified]	365,071.3
CONADI	57,786.1
BANADESA [National Agricultural Development Bank]	189,888.6
BANMA [not further identified]	41,154.9
CREPREPO [not further identified]	6,269.4
Public Enterprises	1,204,557.2
ENEE [not further identified]	628,211.4
SANAA [National Water and Sewage Service]	58,715.1
ENP [National Port Enterprise]	83,800.5
HONDUTEL [Honduran Telecommunications Enterprise]	221,061.5
COHDEFOR	52,242.3
INVA	36,582.9
IHCAFE	43,776.1
IHMA [Honduran Agricultural Marketing Institute]	28,089.3
BANASUPRO	32,762.3
FNH [not further identified]	15,594.5
COHBANA [Honduran Banana Corporation]	3,721.3
Autonomous Institutions	546,789.3
IHSS [Honduran Social Security Institute]	126,493.2
INJUPEMP [Teachers Retirement and Pension Institute]	104,061.6
INPREMA [not further identified]	102,337.9
PANI [not further identified]	49,062.2
INA [National Agrarian Institute]	29,146.2
CDI [not further identified]	6,706.4
JNBS [not further identified]	13,837.8
INFOP [Production Development Institute]	20,706.7
EDUCREDITO [not further identified]	2,953.1
UNAH [National Autonomous University of Honduras	80,981.7
IHAH [not further identified]	2,029.4
IHDECOOP [not further identified]	2,473.1
Total	2,405,516.8

Source: Public Sector Financial Programming Dept. September 1988

* Poll Names Callejas 'Most Admired Honduran'

32480063c Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 27 Dec 88 p 40

[Text] Business Technology, specializing in market and opinion polls and surveys, recently took a public opinion poll in Tegucigalpa to learn which Hondurans are most admired by capital residents.

Results: Honduran Figure Most Admired by Capital Residents-1988

1. Rafael Leonardo Callejas
2. Sister Maria Rosa
3. Jose Rafael Ferrari
4. Carlos Roberto Reina
5. Carlos Flores Facusse
6. Monsignor Hector Enrique Santos
7. Salvador Nasralla
8. Alejandrina de Villeda
9. Carlos Orbin Montoya
10. Moises Canello, Gautama Fonseca, Rodrigo Wong Arevalo

In 1987 the Most Admired Figures Were:

1. Sister Maria Rosa
2. Rafael Leonardo Callejas
3. Jose Azcona Hoyo
4. Rodrigo Wong Arevalo
5. Monsignor Santos
6. Oswaldo Ramos Soto
7. Jose Rafael Ferrari
8. Salvador Nasralla
9. Carlos Flores Facusse
10. Alejandrina de Villeda

Rafael Leonardo Callejas, the National Party's [PN] candidate for the Presidency, is the Honduran figure most admired by capital residents. He was mentioned 20.7 percent of the time. In second place is Sister Maria Rosa, who was the winner in 1987. Third place is occupied by Mr Jose Rafael Ferrari, president of the Teleton Foundation, who ranked seventh in 1987. Carlos Roberto Reina holds fourth place, with 8.2 percent of the votes.

Carlos Flores Facusse, the Liberal candidate for the presidency, gained fifth place, with 4.8 percent of the votes.

Monsignor Hector Enrique Santos is the figure ranking in sixth place.

Engineer Salvador Nasralla, director of Sports Five, holds the seventh spot, an improvement over the previous year. Two former first ladies also appear on the list of most admired Honduran figures, namely, Mrs Alejandrina Bermudez, widow of Villeda Morales, and the present National Party candidate for the Tegucigalpa municipal mayor's office, Mrs Nora Gunera de Melgar Castro.

The winner of the Liberal Party's internal elections in Tegucigalpa, Carlos Orbin Montoya, also appears among the top 10. Finally, three Hondurans share the number 10 position, emerging with the same percentage of votes (2), namely: singer Moises Canello, columnist Gautama Fonseca, and journalist Rodrigo Wong Arevalo.

Comparing this year's results with those of last year, we can observe that 8 of the 10 who proved to be the most admired persons in 1987 repeat that honor in 1988, namely: Callejas, Sister Maria Rosa, Ferrrari, Nasralla, Flores Facusse, Alejandrina de Villeda Morales, Monsignor Santos, and Wong Arevalo.

Not included in the top 10 spots this year was President Azcona, who had ranked third in 1987, nor the former rector of UNAH [National Autonomous University of Honduras], Jose Oswaldo Ramos Soto;, although they do not appear among the first 10, both received mention. The following persons succeeded in gaining a position among the 10 most admired: Carlos Roberto Reina, Carlos Montoya, Nora de Melgar, Moises Canello, and Guatama Fonseca.

Other persons mentioned but not rated among the first 10 are: Oswaldo Ramos Soto, Policarpo Paz Garcia, Humberto Regalado Hernandez, Walter Lopez Reyes, Miguel Angel Izaguirre, Roberto Suazo Cordova, Ramon Villeda Bermudez, Jose Azcona del Hoyo, Jaime Rosenthal Oliva, Jorge Arturo Reina, Monsignor Oscar Rodriguez, Ramon Custodio, Gonzalo Carias, Carlos Lopez Contreras, Mariano de Jesus Gonzalez, Juan Flores, Enrique Aguilar Paz, Efrain Diaz Arrivillaga, German Allan Padget, Gustavo Alvarez Martinez, Enrique Ortez Colindres, Juan Ramon Martinez, Juan Almendares Bonilla, Jorge Arturo Reina, and Jorge Omar Casco.

Results According to Sex

Male
1. Callejas
2. Ferrari
3. Sister Maria Rosa
4. Beto Reina
5. Flores
6. Nasralla
7. Montoya
8. Wong Arevalo
9. Alejandrina de Villeda
10. Guatama Fonseca

Female
1. Callejas
2. Sister Maria Rosa
3. Ferrari
4. Carlos Reina
5. Flores Facusse
6. Nora de Melgar
7. Monsignor Santos
8. Moises Canello
9. Alejandrina de Villeda
10. Nasralla

Results By Age Groups

18-24
1. Sister Maria Rosa
2. Callejas
3. Ferrari

4. Carlos R. Reina
5. Nora de Melgar
6. Moises Canello
7. Nasralla
8. Flores Facusse
9. Wong Arevalo
10. Miguel Angel Izaguirre

25-39
1. Callejas
2. Ferrari
3. Sister Maria Rosa
4. Montoya
5. Monsignor Santos
6. Alejandrina de Villeda
7. Flores Facusse
8. Nasralla
9. Wong Arevalo
10. Guatama Fonseca

40-59
1. Callejas
2. Sister Maria Rosa
3. Ferrari
4. Carlos R. Reina
5. Flores Facusse
6. Monsignor Santos
7. Guatama Fonseca
8. Jorge A. Reina
9. Oswaldo Ramos Soto
10. Nora del Melgar

60+
1. Callejas
2. Carlos R. Reina
3. Sister Maria Rosa
4. Ferrari
5. Alejandrina de Villeda
6. Nora de Melgar
7. Ramon Villeda B.
8. Monsignor Santos
9. Monsignor Rodriguez
10. Jose Azcona del Hoyo

Nicaragua

Assessment of Regional Presidential Summit

RN's Calero Comments

PA1802204489 Tegucigalpa Televisora Hondurena in Spanish 0100 GMT 17 Feb 89

["Exclusive" interview with Nicaraguan Resistance leader Adolfo Calero by Carlos Ritz; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ritz] How do you interpret the Central American presidents' decision regarding the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN]?

[Calero] Neither the RN nor the United States, which is the other party involved, were previously consulted about that decision. We respect the sovereign rights of each of the countries involved, and we are aware of the historic responsibility the Central American presidents have assumed with the declaration they issued. That declaration will have a significant effect on the future of Central America. The presidents accepted Daniel Ortega's proposal to carry out a process of democratization in Nicaragua. The presidents also proposed to draft, within 90 days, a plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation, or relocation of the RN.

The proposal does not say that the RN will be demobilized, repatriated, or relocated in 90 days, but that the presidents pledge to draft a plan within 90 days. In addition, the Central American presidents asserted that the parties involved will have to seek directly negotiated solutions to the conflict.

We, the RN members, have always said we are willing to lay down our weapons in exchange for democracy in Nicaragua. We noticed that the San Salvador Declaration does not encompass as much as Esquipulas II or the Alajuela Declaration. For example, it does not urge a general amnesty, but a partial one. It does not give details on the democratic measures to be taken in Nicaragua. It only says that among other measures, the Nicaraguan Government will amend the electoral law and the media law.

We—and the Central American presidents are aware of this, too—have seen how the Sandinists have failed to comply with each and every one of the agreements they have signed since 1979, including agreements with the OAS, the Esquipulas II Agreement, and the Alajuela Agreement in 1988.

[Ritz] Mr Calero, how do you view the summit? Is it a failure or a success for the anti-Sandinist forces?

[Calero] In 1979, the Sandinists announced that their revolution had no borders and that a communist revolution would sweep all of Central America. That, however, has not happened. The RN has kept the Sandinists inside Nicaragua and has not allowed them to carry out their expansionist plans. The Sandinist revolution as such has failed in Nicaragua. There is a social, economic, and political disaster in Nicaragua unprecedented in Central America. The disaster is so large that an economic collapse may occur in Nicaragua before elections are held and before changes take place in the Nicaraguan Government.

[Ritz] A while ago, you talked to us about the consequences of the summit declaration. What would those consequences be?

[Calero] To unilaterally disarm the force that has kept communism inside Nicaragua entails a serious responsibility. That is very important, because that action would

leave the Sandinists free to implement their destructive plans not only in Nicaragua, but also in the rest of Central America. Thank God, as I said, the declaration talks about a plan to be drafted within 90 days to then carry out the voluntary demobilization, repatriation, or relocation of the RN. Before that plan is implemented, the Sandinists are supposed to give clear and specific proof that the democratization process in Nicaragua is under way.

[Ritz] Mr Calero, what role will the RN play during those 90 days? Will you wait passively or will you exert pressure for the fulfillment of the agreement signed in Costa Del Sol, El Salvador?

[Calero] We have already begun exerting pressure, and we hope the other Central American countries also apply pressure so the Sandinists fulfill Esquipulas II, because they themselves said all the agreements are a common and indivisible whole. We hope the United States, which has viewed the declaration with great skepticism, will help us to make sure it is implemented. If, however, it is impossible to do so because the Sandinists refuse to meet their obligations, we hope the United States will reconsider its decision and approve the delivery of weapons and ammunition to the RN in order to force changes in Nicaragua.

[Ritz] A while ago you talked to us about the pessimism that exists within the RN because you have proof of the lack of fulfillment of the peace agreements. What is your personal opinion?

[Calero] As I said before, an agreement cannot be based on a Sandinist promise. To base an agreement on a Sandinist promise is like tying up a dog with sausage links. In other words, it is impossible to fulfill an agreement if there is no leverage or some kind of power to force the Sandinists to fulfill their agreements.

[Ritz] Thank you very much for your statements. The Honduran people have now heard your views, Mr Calero. Good evening.

[Calero] I am glad and thank you very much.

[Ritz] Thank you very much, Mr Calero.

Opposition Parties React

PA1702214289 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Last night the Group of 14 so-called opposition political parties and the Permanent Workers Congress, CPT, held the first of a series of meetings to discuss the agreements reached by the region's presidents in La Paz, El Salvador.

At the end of the meeting, during which the participants also discussed future strategy, Frank Duarte, political secretary of the Democratic Conservative Party, read a communique in which the members said the following:

1. The members feel that the El Salvador Declaration complements the Esquipulas II agreements and reaffirms that the country's problems should be solved through a political, negotiated path.

2. They maintain that amendments to the Constitution are valid, and the channel for reaching agreements in this regard is the national dialogue, which, they said, should be convoked immediately by the government with the same members with which it was originally established.

3. They urge the government and the FSLN to act with the necessary seriousness and thought to achieve democratization and lasting peace.

The 14 political parties declared a permanent discussion session regarding the El Salvador agreements and said that the inclusion of the CPT's member organizations serves to reinforce the parties. On Tuesday, 21 February, the date of the next meeting, they will discuss the possibility of establishing a legal commission to work on the proposed amendment to the electoral law.

Contra Leaders on Elections, Mexican Relations

PA2002021889 Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 13 Feb 89 pp 1-A, 28-A

[Report by Francisco Rodriguez Diaz]

[Excerpts] Miami, 12 Feb—Arturo Cruz, the 1984 UNO [Nicaraguan Opposition Unity] presidential candidate, has stated: Let us forget about presidential elections in Nicaragua for 3-4 years and return to the 1979 status quo of having a government consisting of the opposition, the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN], and the Sandinists, based on a plan approved by consensus—and with the participation of someone like Pablo Antonio Cuadra, who inspires trust among all the parties involved.

RN leader Adolfo Calero asserted: "We said we are willing to exchange our weapons for democracy; that is, we will not accept the Sandinists' word but we will accept actions. We are willing to turn in our weapons once those actions materialize."

Calero added: "The situation has changed. I expect the Mexican Government to be less cooperative with the Sandinist regime and much more realistic about the Central American situation." The same is expected from other countries. "Even before he was sworn in, [Venezuelan President] Carlos Andres Perez spoke against the system that is being imposed in Nicaragua. [Costa Rican] President Oscar Arias himself is scared and does not know what to do. He asks: What can I do? What can I do? He wants to keep his Nobel Prize and maintain his prestige." [passage omitted]

Arturo Cruz asserted that Latin American countries, West European countries, U.S. liberals, and even Nicaraguan leaders themselves must admit the Sandinist system has failed. "Governments cannot continue to aid and abet the Sandinists," he emphasized, and added: We know governments want to stop U.S. intervention, and this is understandable, but they should also reject Soviet intervention. The governments must tell the Sandinists: "You cannot change one tyranny for another." [passage omitted]

Cruz asserted: The problem with the Sandinists is that they claim "they are willing to relinquish the government but not power." If we have honest elections and the Sandinists lose and then say they will not relinquish power, "this would represent an insult to the opposition parties and their dignity. The opposition parties would commit political suicide if they agreed to this."

He added: "We should return to the July 1979 status quo of a pluralist government with a cooperative character. There are people interested in this solution. We would gradually work toward this. First there would be municipal elections; then assembly elections; then the Central American parliament elections—until we hold presidential elections in 3-4 years."

Cruz warns that if presidential elections are held in 1990—when President Ortega's term ends—"the opposition cannot make the mistake of abstaining. The opposition must participate, under protest or not, especially if this is the ultimate test. The Sandinists did not have to commit fraud when we withdrew from the elections. We should have forced them to do so."

He said: The Sandinists have perpetrated fraud since the beginning, starting with voter registration. When the official registration figures were issued, the FSLN said the Electoral Council had made a mistake and that there were 250,000 more voters than expected. [passage omitted]

That cannot happen again, he said. "And the U.S. Embassy and Government cannot get involved with the political parties either. Foreign political parties must support Nicaragua's political parties. It is different if PRI supports the Nicaraguan Liberal Party or the U.S. Republican Party sends money to the Nicaraguan Conservative Party. But the U.S. Embassy and Government should not get involved ...." [passage omitted]

Calero feels the Contadora Group did not prevent the outbreak of war throughout Central America. He said: "It was the RN that hemmed the Sandinists in by keeping them busy. The shipment of weapons to El Salvador dropped and FMLN activities decreased. The Cinchonero Peoples Liberation Movement, which tried to cause problems in Honduras during 1983 and 1984, was also unable to do a thing. The RN stopped the war." We—the contra leader added—want relations with Mexico because that is the only government with which we have not had semi-official relations. "We have been to Colombia and Venezuela. We met with Costa Rican President Oscar Arias. But we have never been to Mexico."

Calero added: "I have great hopes Mexico will be more ... objective in its foreign policy than it has been, especially since the Jose Lopez Portillo administration. Of course, there was the previous foreign secretary ... ah, [Bernardo] Sepulveda!" [passage omitted]

Opposition Leaders Welcome Government Actions
PA2202191089 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Interview with Eduardo Coronado, president of the Independent Liberal Party for National Unity, and Gerardo Alfaro, member of the Democratic Conservative Party of the National Executive Committee, by unidentified reporter; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Coronado] The national dialogue is a great opportunity to turn the guidelines established at the Salvadoran summit into reality. For that reason, national reconciliation is a challenge to all the parties in Nicaragua, including the FSLN. Reconciliation will facilitate the implementation of other steps to democratize Nicaragua, such as the elections.

[Reporter] What impact does the announcement of a possible pardon for former Somozist guardsmen have on reconciliation?

[Coronado] We think it is a first step to draw closer to the goals and topics we believe must be discussed to reach an understanding. The pardon is part of this concept of an understanding. Perhaps we eventually will have total amnesty for all Nicaraguans arrested for political crimes. This way, the second step to discussing all national political matters will have been taken.

[Reporter] Gerardo Alfaro, what does your party think about the meeting between the government and the opposition?

[Alfaro] First of all, the Democratic Conservative Party of Nicaragua [PCDN], which will attend the meeting with President Ortega, thinks this meeting between the government and the opposition will serve to discuss preliminary aspects leading to a national dialogue. The PCDN leadership does not have specific points to bring up. It is waiting to hear the president's comments on the Central American summit. We are going to listen to him and express our views. This, however, does not mean bilateral agreements will be reached at that meeting. We hope to have a national dialogue where all of the domestic opposition forces are represented. At that point, we will begin our work with the government delegates.

[Reporter] How do you feel about reelecting the president based on the Constitution?

[Alfaro] The reelection cannot be based on the Constitution. The Constitution says nothing on it.

[Reporter] But it does not ban reelection.

[Alfaro] That is another matter. Of course, in Latin America and in Nicaragua, where the Presidency exists.... [changes thought] I think if my party had reached power, it too would have considered this issue. In principle, we do not support reelection, but I believe reelection is often necessary because a president has a very brief period of 6 years to fully implement his plans and projects. In this case, Nicaragua has been held back politically due to the long years of war against the counterrevolution, the hurricane, and the country's socioeconomic problems. Therefore, the government has had little opportunity to show its followers and the opposition any achievements for its years in power.

Coalition of Opposition To Challenge FSLN

PA1902151889 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 17 Feb 89 pp 1, 8

[Article by Edgardo Barberena]

[Text] Several opposition politicians interviewed yesterday by EL NUEVO DIARIO are wondering whether it may be necessary for the legally recognized opposition parties to form a "coalition" to challenge the FSLN in the upcoming elections.

The politicians began to speculate after it was reported in El Salvador that President Ortega had decided to hold elections in Nicaragua in the 1st quarter of 1990. This decision was one of the points included in the declaration issued by the Central American leaders during their summit.

Several politicians from legally registered parties explained this possible "coalition" did not refer to either the Ramiro Sacasa Guerrero Democratic Coordinating Board or to the "Bloc of Five" [not further identified], much less to the "Group of 14 Parties."

Social Democratic Party President Guillermo Potoy said, "The opposition will probably nominate a single candidate for the elections." He admitted, however, the parties will have very little time to organize their campaign now that the elections have been moved forward.

Potoy referred to Ortega's statements regarding the financing that the parties will receive from the government during the elections.

"He (Ortega) said there is a law forbidding any funding from the the United States. However, there is also a law that allows parties to receive international aid from sources sharing their ideological leanings regardless of country," Potoy said.

Potoy recognized the government will only be able to provide minimal financial backing for the upcoming election campaign because of the serious economic problems Nicaragua is facing; however, with foreign aid, the parties will be able to launch their election campaigns.

Potoy also stressed the need to reform the electoral laws and the media "to guarantee true elections. Later," he added, "we can see about reforming the Constitution." The Constitution itself states that constitutional changes must be made in two legislative periods.

For Popular Social Christian Party [PPSC] Deputy Alfredo Rodriguez, "the question that is circulating" about forming a "coalition" for the upcoming elections "is important, given the current situation."

Rodriguez explained the Group of 14 Parties "is not a political party alliance. The politicians in this group were simply brought together as a result of the breakdown of last year's national dialogue."

Rodrigez added the political parties are preparing but that "it is still premature to say we will form a coaltion of political parties, because we still have a lot of work ahead of us."

First, it is best to wait and see how the announced national dialogue goes and, "depending on the circumstances, we will decide if we will participate in the elections as a coalition or individually."

The PPSC deputy admitted, "It is still possible that the opposition may face the ruling party in elections." He added his party won fourth place in the 1984 parliamentary elections but that the situation in 1990 will be different.

In conclusion, Rodriguez noted the FSLN won 67 percent of the votes in the past elections, but in the 1990 elections, "we think its percentage of votes will be smaller."

On the night of 15 February, when President Ortega spoke to the people on a radio and television network, he said the people will "continue to vote for the FSLN." Referring to the opposition parties, he said they "must get ready to prove they have the support of the Nicarguan people."

Ortega also explained, "Reelection is not a crime. In countries such as the United States, which is viewed as a model by some political parties and media in the country, reelection is a reality."

As for moving up the date of the elections, the president noted that "from a constitutional point of view, there will not be amendments to the Constitution but to the Electoral Law. However, we must understand this as a political commitment and examine it carefully."

Deputy Carlos Cuadra told EL NUEVO DIARIO about the Marxist-Leninist Peoples Action Movement's [MAP-ML] stance on the comments about the announced "coalition." He said the "FSLN is espousing the same cause that in the opposition claim to support."

"Another of the right's problems is getting the people to accept their proposals, because during periods of crisis the bourgeoisie tends to adopt a fascist-like attitude," he noted.

Internal divisions among the political parties, Cuadra added, constitute imperialist options, because "their stances have ranged from being openly pro-Reagan and warmongering to submissive to Socialist International, all of them seeking to bog down at home the process of active participation."

"The right's chief problem is that it does not represent the people. It also finds it hard to be the mouthpiece of their own groups, while those groups' political leaders are reaching an understanding with the government," he stated.

Although the MAP-ML has yet to define its stance on the announced 1990 elections, he explained his party "tactically employs participation and uses the political openings taking place as part of the bourgeoise-style institutionalization of the government."

"From this viewpoint, the elections constitute a secondary means of solving some problems. However, we will decide on how to use this opening based on the way things develop," he noted.

Ministry Denies Army Stealing Costa Rican Cattle

PA2202182989 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Counterrevolutionaries dressed in EPS uniforms are responsible for the wave of cattle rustling at the border with Costa Rica. A Defense Ministry source denied reports from Costa Rica blaming the EPS for the cattle rustling.

In the past few months, the Sandinist government has been warning that the contras will soon start a crime wave throughout Central America.

The Nicaraguan and Costa Rican Technical Commissions met today to continue the talks on possible bilateral agreements on joint border patrols. The meetings will conclude tomorrow. Positive results are expected, and this will lead to a new atmosphere at the border. Colonel Juan Felix Barrantes, Costa Rican Civil Police director; the Costa Rican ambassador to Managua; and Costa Rican security officials attended the meeting. The Nicaraguan Government delegation was headed by Colonel Roberto Calderon.

Cordoba Again Devalued, Fuel Prices Increase

PA2302051289 Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 0424 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] According to a Central Bank of Nicaragua communique, the cordoba has continued its plunge, and, beginning tomorrow, the exchange rate of the dollar will rise from 3,200 to 3,800 cordobas. This is the fifth devaluation since the issuance of the new cordoba and is part of a what the government has called a plan to counter the galloping inflation rate in the country.

Gasoline prices will also go up tomorrow, following the devaluation of the cordoba. The price of a gallon of gasoline will rise from 6,700 cordobas to 7,900 cordobas. A gallon of diesel fuel will rise from 4,800 cordobas to 5,600 cordobas. Aviation fuel will go from 6,800 cordobas to 9,500 cordobas per gallon. Kerosene prices will be increased from 4,300 cordobas to 5,000 cordobas a gallon.

The price of a 10-pound tank of liquefied gas will rise from 3,500 cordobas to 4,200 cordobas; the 25-pound tank from 8,800 cordobas to 10,500 cordobas; and the 100-pound tank from 39,000 cordobas to 46,300 cordobas.

Panama

U.S. Embassy in Bogota Orders 'Censorship'

PA1702190089 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 17 Feb 89 pp 1, 13

[Report by Roberto E. Rodriguez]

[Text] The U.S. Embassy in Colombia has ordered strict press censorship in that South American country to hide the truth about gunrunning operations for the rebel forces and their connection with a Southern Command officer.

In a misinforming and outrageous press communique, the U.S. diplomatic mission complained it was the victim of an "alarming" disinformation campaign in Panama.

The influential Colombian dailies, EL TIEMPO and EL ESPECTADOR, referred yesterday to that issue based on a communique that concludes in ordering the "parties responsible" for Colombian media "not to consider as legitimate news any information coming from a reliable source." [as published]

An analyst of the U.S. Government's press strategies told MATUTINO that the U.S. Government—through the State Department and other offices close to journalists in

Washington—uses a clandestine tactic to leak false information and press reports so the influential U.S. newspapers and news agencies will "launder information" and thus hide the sources. In this manner, the sources will be hidden, which will have ill-intended and destabilizing effects on the governments that defend their self-determination, nationalism, sovereignty, and independence.

Article Outlines 'Provocations' by U.S. Troops

PA2202184889 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 22 Feb 89 pp A-1, A-10

[Article by Emilio Sinclair]

[Text] According to reports received yesterday by Lieutenant Colonel Aquilino Sieiro, cochairman of the Joint Committee, arrogant attitudes, provocations, intimidations, and false reports about alleged incidents to blame Panama are part of the harassment that members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in Panama are using against local authorities.

Representatives of the five subcommittees—waters and lands, public services, administrative and legal services, public security, and community services—explained to Sieiro all the inconveniences, obstacles, and harassment they are subjected to by U.S. Government officials in Panama. These officials, following instructions from the White House, disregard and ignore the country's laws.

Lt Col Sieiro, who presided over the meeting and calmly listened to the details of the violations to the treaty, said that "we have to provide services out of respect for the spirit of the treaty;" however, Panamanian officials are stumbling over barriers imposed by U.S. citizens.

According to those who attended the meeting, this is a provocative attitude on the part of U.S. citizens.

These provocative attitudes mentioned in the meeting include: U.S. Army jeeps, equipped with machineguns, are driven to the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] headquarters in El Chorrillo; the drivers make a "U" turn to draw attention to be admonished; and then they disregard the traffic policemen's calls to halt. Another case reported in the meeting is: On weekends at Kobbe Beach, U.S. soldiers provoke and even are rude toward Panamanian ladies in an attempt to cause a confrontation with Panamanian men, which could result in another incident similar to the "Watermelon Slice Incident." History tells us that the arrogance of Jack Oliver—an American who insolently refused to pay 5 cents to Jose Manuel Luna, a Parita peasant, for a slice of watermelon—led to a violent confrontation between Panamanians and Americans. Because of this incident, Panama had to pay $412,394 in indemnification. The squabble, known in Panamanian history as the "Watermelon Slice Incident," occurred on 15 April 1865 (123 years ago) when Francisco de Fabrega was governor. Two Panamanians and 15 Americans were killed, and 13 Panamanians and 16 Americans were wounded.

Other provocations, such as that of 9 January 1964, resulted in a confrontation between Panamanians and Americans. On that occasion, 23 Panamanians—whose relatives are still mourning over their deaths—were killed and 500 were wounded, many of whom lost jobs and opportunities in life because they were crippled.

Those killed in 1964 were: Ascanio Arosemena, Victor Iglesias, Rodolfo Benitez, Estanislao Orobio, Ezequiel Gonzalez, Jorge Enrique Gil, Maritza Alabarca, Alberto Oriol, Alberto M. Constante, Victor Garibaldo, Gonzalo Orance Robles, Carlos Renato Lara, Jose Del Cid, Luis Vicente Bonilla, Ovidio Saldana, Teofilo de la Torre, Rosa Elena Landecho, Ricardo Murgas, Jacinto Palacios, Celestino Villarreta, Rogelio Lara, and Jose Aguilar. [22 people listed as published]

The Americans, protected by and interpreting the canal treaties in their own way, have also asked the Panamanian Government for benefits as stingy as alleging they are entitled to be exempted from paying the road toll to use the Arraijan-La Chorrera highway when they drive their private vehicles on it.

The current status of the relations between the FDP and the U.S. Armed Forces "remains at a low profile," Sieiro commented, recommending to those at the meeting to avoid provocations.

It was reported that the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in Panama continue to take unilateral actions without consulting the Panamanian Government and without interpreting the spirit and letter of the treaties. For example, they are expanding Howard Air Force Base; they are building an access road to Veracruz; they caused ecological damage when an oil tank spilled at Howard—they did not inform Panama about it—they are asking that Kobbe Beach be returned to them for their exclusive use; they disrespect women who swim there; they constantly cut the power for the food and beverage stand operating at that beach; they do not occupy, maintain, or return to Panama certain houses—after the houses deteriorate and are damaged, they are returned to Panama, with the U.S. Armed Forces alleging "that they are complying with the treaty."

Several cases that affect Panama's educational process were mentioned in the meeting. For example, in Coco Solo, on the Atlantic Coast, there is an abandoned school that has not been reverted to Panama; no maintenance is given to it, and it is been allowed to deteriorate.

"They are waiting for it to completely deteriorate before turning it over to Panama," it was said at the meeting.

Lt Col Sieiro referred to the poisoning of a large number of swallows by U.S. authorities. He called it "a massacre of birds." He said U.S. authorities claimed the swallows were damaging certain buildings and said they had to be eliminated. They killed them when they could have just scared them off by spraying them with water. Sieiro

urged ecological groups, especially the National Association for the Conservation of Nature to take note of this matter. "It was a horrible crime," he added.

The problem continues. They do not want to renew licenses so Panama can use certain facilities in areas still under their control.

The officials in charge of Historical Patrimony programs reported they are finding difficulties in crossing Fort Sherman to go to Fort San Lorenzo Fort because sometimes they are not granted access.

These officials also disclosed that, at Fort Sherman, they have seen people working to expand the landing strip, troop movements, military operations, and certain activities that violate the Torrijos-Carter treaties. According to what these officials said, it is believed Fort Sherman is used by planes flying to Palmerola Air Force Base in Honduras to carry "contra" insurgents trained in our country without the authorization of local authorities.

Fort Sherman is located in Punta Toro, a strategic site on the Panamanian Atlantic coast, north of Colon Province. Its construction began in January 1912 and was named after U.S. Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman, who replaced Ulysses Grant in 1869. Fort Sherman has been the center for jungle training since 1915.

The plundering of objects belonging to the country's historical patrimony was also considered a violation of the treaties. It was reported that a ship identified as the "Explorer" anchored off the Panamanian Atlantic coast, where Fort San Lorenzo Fort is located, and used divers to remove gold objects from the ship "San Jose," which had sunk off Panamanian coasts. The "Explorer" left on 7 February 1989 for the British Cays and Turtle [names as published] Islands in the Caribbean. INTERPOL has been notified of this so it can proceed to seize the ship.

All this is added to the U.S. refusal to pay the income and educational taxes withheld from Panamaian employees who work for the Canal Commission. The Americans are also refusing to pay house rental water, energy, and telephone bills.

It was explained that Panamanian authorities were also surprised by the U.S. Armed Forces when they hired "Red Devil" buses, normally used for internal Panama City routes, to take troops from one place to another. Many of these buses drove through Panama City full of U.S. troops without local authorities noticing. This activity was stopped, and the U.S. Armed Forces were forced to use the SACA buses, which is a bus company that drives through areas of military coordination.

The United States uses cars rented in Panama to patrol areas of military coordination; then, through transformations and changes of license plates, these cars are used for other activities in Panama City and the interior.

"These are provocations," it was said, but the real causes for this matter are unknown.

Soldiers have been captured taking pictures in front of the building and the surrounding area where General Manuel Antonio Noriega has his offices. Recently, four soldiers, in plainclothes, were captured while they were taking pictures in Cerro Jefe, Cerro Azul, where there are radiocommunication installations. These soldiers claimed they were lost. Also, at Farallon River, in Anton, two individuals—U.S. Army soldiers—were captured while taking pictures of high-security places in Rio Hato. In Panama City, they are constantly going from one place to another, in rented cars, taking pictures of strategic places, actions that result in their arrest by FDP members. They then claim they were ill-treated, insulted, and "even raped," it was reported at the meeting.

The theory regarding these types of activities is that they are preparing a long report to allege human rights are being violated in Panama and that hostile actions are carried out against U.S. soldiers.

Sieiro noted they are acting "unilaterally and without consulting Panama" but recommended caution and asked those present not to fall for these provocations.

He commented: "This is a plan of provocations that is very dangerous at every level."

Panama has had difficulties with the United States since the last century. The United States began its presence on the isthmus in 1850 with the construction of the transisthmian railroad. Its first armed intervention occurred on 19 September 1856 when the ships "Independence" and "Saint Mary" arrived with troops that had been ordered to occupy the country.

Panamanian authorities ignore the preconceived plan and are afraid that a pretext is being sought to invade the country.

Solis Meets Salinas; USSR Agreement Ratified

PA2202153789 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 22 Feb 89 p A-1

[Unattributed report]

[Text] Mexico City, (DPA)—Panamanian President Manuel Solis Palma ended a 20-hour private visit yesterday morning to the Mexican capital, where he held talks with his Mexican colleague, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and ratified a trade agreement signed with the USSR 10 years ago.

Solis Palma, who made a stopover during his trip to Tokyo, where he will attend Emperor Hirohito's funeral, met the day before yesterday with Salinas de Gortari for 40 minutes to discuss bilateral and international issues, according to the Mexican Presidency.

"Our talks were limited to overall issues," said Solis Palma, who took the opportunity of his stay in Mexico City to denounce U.S. pressures against Panama because of the presence of General Manuel Antonio Noriega as head of the Panama Defense Forces.

In a ceremony given great importance by the Panamanian Government, Foreign Minister Jorge Eduardo Ritter and Soviet Ambassador to Mexico Rostislav Sergeyev exchanged notes the night before yesterday, ratifying a trade agreement signed on 8 October 1979 that grants Panama most-favored-nation treatment.

Panama and the USSR do not have diplomatic relations, but Ritter said the ratification of the agreement is part of his government's openness policy in the international field.

In previous statements, President Solis Palma said U.S. economic aggression against Panama "does not mean my country will join the socialist bloc or ask for Soviet support."

Diplomatic Relations Established With Angola

PA1702131689 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Text] The Panamanian Foreign Ministry announced this afternoon that as of today, Panama and the People's Republic of Angola have established formal diplomatic relations at the ambassador level. A joint communique, signed by the ambassadors of the two countries to the United Nations, expresses the hope that the establishment of diplomatic ties will lead to mutually advantageous cooperation. In this way, Panama and Angola are consolidating their ties of friendship and cooperation based on the principles of mutual respect, national sovereignty, and equality of rights among nations.

PPA's Nicosia Invites Noriega to Meeting

PA1702185889 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 17 Feb 89 pp A-1, A-10

[Letter by Hildebrando Nicosia Perez, presidential candidate of the Panamamenist Authentic Party (PPA), to General Manuel Antonio Noriega and the General Staff of the Panama Defense Forces (FDP) in Panama City on 16 February]

[Text] Gen Manuel Antonio Noriega, Colonel Marco A. Justines, Colonel Elias Castillo Figueroa, Colonel Alberto Purcell, Colonel Angel Mina Justiniani, Colonel Julio Ow Young, Colonel Santos Motta, Colonel Guillermo Wong, Colonel Roberto Armijo, Lieutenant Colonel Ricardo Garibaldo, Lieutenant Colonel Teodoro Alexander, Lieutenant Colonel Aquilino Siero, Lieutenant Colonel Moises Correa, Lieutenant Colonel Virgilio Mirones, Lieutenant Colonel Aristides Hassan, Lieutenant Colonel Nivaldo Madrinan, Lieutenant Colonel Gerardo Garcia, Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Velarde, Lieutenant Colonel Arnulfo Castrejon, Lieutenant Colonel Pascual Gonzalez, Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Garcia Aguilera, Lieutenant Colonel Enrique Ruiz Valdez, Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Arosemena King, Lieutenant Colonel Alfredo Remon.

Dear members of the FDP General Staff: We are hereby cordially inviting each and every one of you to attend a formal meeting with all the members of our national directorate and with the PPA's Nicosia-Diaz-Ponce slate to be held in our headquarters—the people's home. At that meeting, we will explain to you the PPA's government economic and political plans, as we have done to the country's news media. However, we will give a detailed explanation without haste and in plain language.

Our stance of independent opposition, seeking unity among all Panamanians, is the legacy of our founding leader, Arnulfo Arias Madrid. We will uphold this legacy, as we will continue our struggle against civilian and military oligarchies.

However, we once again want to reaffirm our party's dynamic and creative policy, which since 1983 has been pressing for what we deem is the only solution to the intransigent confrontation we are experiencing on the part of the government and the opposition. Functional democracy calls for a great nationwide coalition of convictions, without sectarianism or partisanship, odious bias, or evil favoritism, to put a stop to demagogic lies and violent retaliation.

Military chiefs, just as you openly and publicly participate in the political activities of the progovernment parties, your actions must prove your true impartiality so statements on the honesty of the 7 May 1989 elections can be believed.

We want to strongly tell you about our views on the FDP.

The Executive Branch of the future government, over which we will preside, will make all its decisions based on Panama's laws and Constitution.

We will be particularly careful to respect the FDP military ranks and hierarchy based on seniority as they stand on 30 September 1989 [last day in office of current administration].

We will be guided at all times by the following concepts: calmness, moderation, vision, and welfare of the fatherland.

The FDP's mission must be based on strict compliance with the principle of defending the citizens' well-being and properties.

The FDP's well-known professionalism must guarantee the faithful fulfillment of these duties.

We assure you the organized strength of the poor will inexorably win in May 1989. We will be awaiting your visit to our headquarters, Laredo Building, 12 Cuba Avenue, any time between 20 and 24 February.

Sincerely, Hildebrando Nicosia Perez, PPA presidential candidate and the poor people's candidate.

Noriega Accepts Invitation

PA2202011089 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2357 GMT 22 Feb 89

["Exclusive statement" by General Manuel Antonio Noriega, chief of the Panama Defense Forces, during telephone interview with Televisora Nacional news director Julio Ortega "a few minutes ago" in Panama City—recorded]

[Text] Yes, Julio Ortega, with regard to the questions you ask on behalf of Televisora Nacional, I officially inform you that the Panama Defense Forces under my command have decided that the Strategic Military Council and other staff members will accept Hildebrando Nicosia's [presidential candidate of the Authentic Panamenist Party, PPA] invitation to participate in a dialogue at the PPA offices. The dialogue will not consist of questions but of answers. They [FDP staff members] will be there as an evolution generation [generacion de evolucion] to hear party members' views and recommendations.

I congratulate Mr Nicosia on his political ability to understand our message. I would like to say that, historically speaking, both Hildebrando Nicosia and [late PPA leader and former Panamanian president] Dr Arnulfo Arias were politically persecuted by the Panamanian ruling bodies. In fact, intelligence and security organizations made no distinction between Arnulfo Arias and Hildebrando Nicosia. We therefore believe that behind Nicosia's political stature there is a certain strength. That is why we will talk with him.

Whether the military likes it or not, he is a historic figure. He has participated in various political events in which violence was the predominant factor, given the politicians' contacts with U.S. organizations. The truth is that anyone who wants to destroy you in this country approaches the gringos.

We believe that Hildebrando Nicosia is an important figure, and we must respect the fact that he was always a man of action. When he was tried in the Balboa Court, I was a major, and I remember that Torrijos issued the order to capture him at all costs. A plan was prepared to take him out of the Balboa Court where he was tried. This is a historical fact that works in his favor. I remember this because I had a subordinate role in his capture—which failed due to two or three things. However, he was a target and he had to be arrested because he had violated Panamanian laws.

It would be interesting—and it will be interesting—for our officers, from whom we hide nothing, to participate in the meeting. In fact, we urge them to learn about those details, to learn who Hildebrando Nicosia is, who Arnulfo Arias was, etc., etc.

Woe unto those who need their masters to meet with others. We feel sorry for them but, well, we are Panamanians and we meet with Panamanians. Since we are Panamanians we will meet with Nicosia and his party. That is all, Julio.

PPA's Nicosia Presents Government Plan

PA1802032589 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 17 Feb 89 pp A-1, A-10

[Report by Hermes Sucre Serrano]

[Text] Authentic Panamenist Party [PPA] presidential candidate Hildebrando Nicosia Perez yesterday said "the upcoming elections will be clean and honest elections because the people will be alert and will monitor closely the election process since the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] are no longer at the service of the shady oligarchy."

Nicosia, who calls himself "the presidential candidate of the poor," said "new FDP officers are aware of their duty and historical mission and will not become the instrument of the turncoats or the militarist hegemony."

During a press conference held at party headquarters, Nicosia said "young soldiers, those currently on duty and those attending military school, support us because we represent the people. Together we will continue the struggle to definitively consolidate our economic, social, and political independence."

During a meeting with members of the local and international press, the PPA presidential candidate said "demands for the full recovery of democracy and civil liberties are prerequisites for guaranteeing clean elections and honestly counted votes."

In a document entitled "The Political Truth of the Panamanian People," Hildebrando Nicosia, a well-known militant of the PPA whose mentor was Dr Arnulfo Arias, said: "The incorporation of the popular masses into the social, economic, and cultural life of the country means adopting effective measures for an overall improvement in the standard of living."

Nicosia, who was accompanied by his running mates, Alfonso Manuel Diaz Tablate and the honorable legislator Emiliano Ponce, said the PPA will prove that no one can defeat it at the polls. The leader of the party whose symbols are "lines encircling creative energy," challenged the other candidates to an unbiased, objective, and open debate "so the people can judge each one of us on his own merits."

Nicosia said the country's two main wounds are: "concentration of wealth and landholding. The huge unsatisfied needs of the poor show the urgent need for a positive change to modifiy certain societal structures," Nicosia pointed out.

"The PPA, without negatively affecting the harmonious relationship between financial capital and work, seeks to improve negative social and economic conditions by harnessing creative forces and advocating change," he added.

Speaking at the PPA political center—with a picture of 3-time President Dr Arnulfo Arias Madrid in the background—Nicosia asserted: "We firmly demand true unity instead of useless confrontation. Otherwise, we will fail in the honest reconciliation plans and will become bogged down in an unavoidable and catastrophic situation."

The PPA leader noted that another one of his immediate objectives is to "create awareness in the villages and the countryside that will make us strong and truly free." Nicosia added that in view of the migration to the cities and abandonment of the countryside, the government as well as the productive sectors should concentrate their investments and efforts on the creation of new businesses and the relocation of various economic development areas.

After calling for more efficient public administration, Nicosia said he is in favor of a decentralization of labor unions to strengthen the working class. "A PPA government will defend labor unions. Today, we are living as they do under totalitarian regimes where the state takes over the labor unions and influences their decisions to favor government programs."

Nicosia said that he, along with Diaz Tablate and Ponce Arce, represent the power of "the poor, organized for the inevitable 7 May 1989 triumph." He added that the solution to the poverty problem demands the adoption in the short term of "heroic employment and social welfare measures."

"The demand for the full recovery of democracy and civil liberties are prerequisites for guaranteeing clean elections and honestly counted votes," Nicosia reiterated during his meeting with the press.

Nicosia called the PPA the true Panamanian people's independent opposition and warned that "the hypocrisy of the so-called intransigent opposition, which has now turned moderate and accepts the FDP as a necessary evil, is shameless. [Panama City Circuito RPC Television] Channel Four has the statement made by [Guillermo] Endara [Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance presidential candidate] in this regard," he added.

PPA first vice presidential candidate Alfonso Manuel Diaz outlined the PPA government plan and pointed out that "we have not done adequate planning with the financial reserves during boom times to cover risks and scarcities during hard times."

"Panamanians need the aid of national and foreign capital to exploit our enormous riches and production resources," Diaz Tablate explained. He also expressed his desire for a better canal policy and his views against state intervention in economic activities.

Honorable legislator Emiliano Ponce mentioned agricultural development, industrial incentives, and service activities as factors that, combined with Panama's geographic position, would contribute to the country's overall development.

Ponce said it is urgent to reactivate the agricultural sector with new financing plans and financial and technical reorganization in accordance with the conditions that exist in each region. He stressed the need to help small and medium producers as a means, along with a fair distribution of land, to make progress in the countryside.

The second vice presidential candidate also stressed the need to provide greater educational opportunities and technical assistance for the agricultural sector.

Editorial Lauds PPA, Reproves ADOC Leaders

PA1802043189 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 17 Feb 89 p 4

[Editorial: "The Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance Fears Dialogue"]

[Text] The Authentic Panamenist Party [PPA], led by Hildebrando Nicosia, has set a great example of political maturity for the parties comprising the so-called Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance [ADOC]. The party's behavior is exemplary in two ways. First, Nicosia refused to accept the dishonest proposal that, according to him, was made by the leaders of the subservient faction led by Guillermo Endara and Ricardo Arias Calderon. According to Nicosia, over $1 million was offered to him if he would agree to become another submissive pawn of the unpatriotic team that receives orders and subsidies from [U.S. Ambassador] Mr Arthur Davis in Panama.

The other way in which Nicosia's behavior is exemplary was his invitation to the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] leadership to visit the PPA directorate offices to exchange viewpoints in hopes of finding solutions to the country's various problems.

This attitude differs from that of the ADOC leaders. Both Endara and Arias Calderon have an entirely different and unjustifiable attitude, which is to oppose dialogue. The reasons for their rejection are well known.

The ADOC leaders know that in any dialogue they would not have any argument to counter the government's evidence of the many achievements and benefits that the Panamanian people have enjoyed during the 20 years that the revolutionary government has been in power.

In such talks, opposition members would find themselves with nothing to say and nothing to offer. However, the government would have much to say on its behalf and what they say could be used as a civic weapon to help government forces remain in power through the electoral victory of candidates Carlos Duque, Ramon Sieiro, and Aquilino Boyd.

One should not rule out the possibility that Endara hopes to attain power through force, because he would not want to disappoint his supporters abroad who most likely have no intention of abandoning their plans to arm their followers, as has been proven many times by the discovery of arsenals both inside the country and abroad. Their intention is to promote violence instead of elections as a means of solving problems.

As for the frustrated megalomaniac Dr Ricardo Arias Calderon, he bases his rejection of dialogue on the trust he continues to have in multinational Christian Democractic leaders. It is because of his beliefs that this man has been able to replenish his dried-up sources of optimism, which motivate him to dress up as an operetta hero and say that he has twice challenged the FDP commander to confront him, but stripped of his powers, his money, his position, and his uniform. However, he (Arias Calderon) would keep all the support of his leaders from abroad, all the economic, political, tactical, psychological, and logistical support.

In conclusion, the brave man wants a confrontation in which he is allowed to use all weapons to be able to defeat an opponent whom he wants handcuffed, gagged, unarmed, undressed, and anesthetized.

COLINA'S Duque Rejects Election Fraud Talk

PA1802005889 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Text] The presidential candidate of the National Liberation Coalition [COLINA], Carlos Duque, has told this radio station that the opposition has participated in the discussions of and in the reforms made to the electoral code, and therefore it cannot talk about the possibility of fraud in the forthcoming elections.

[Begin Duque recording] I would say that the opposition right now is suffering from a disease known as the defeat syndrome. The moment one speaks about fraud it is because one feels defeated. There can be no talk of fraud because it is the opposition and the political parties that do the vote counting under our electoral system.

There is a national vote-counting committee here, and the opposition parties form part of it. There are certain committees that will be issuing credentials to legislators, and the opposition also forms part of these committees.

The current election law was drafted during the meetings that took place in 1983 with the participation of the opposition parties, and all the opposition parties participated in the 1988 discussions to reform the electoral law.

I believe these early charges of fraud are a symptom of the defeat syndrome from which they are suffering. [end recording]

MOLIRENA Leader on Elections, Noriega

PA1802122989 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 Feb 89

[Report on interview with Guillermo Quijano, vice president of the Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement on 15 February in Panama City]

[Text] The Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement, MOLIRENA, held a meeting with local and foreign reporters at noon today. The party leaders responded to questions from those members of the news media who attended. Interesting topics were discussed at this meeting, among which was MOLIRENA's position on the upcoming elections, the responsibility of the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance [ADOC] to rebuild Panama, as well as the unavoidable commitment of complying with the Torrijos-Carter treaties.

Attending the news conference were MOLIRENA President Alfredo Ramirez; Vice President Guillermo Quijano; Guillermo Ford, ADOC second vice presidential candidate; and other directors of that political organization, such as Guillermo Casco Arias and Jorge Ruben Rosas. At this meeting with the press, Guillermo Ford denied that the Panamanian opposition maintains contact with ousted President Eric Arturo Delvalle.

MOLIRENA Vice President Guillermo Quijano, in commenting on the current political situation in the country just 2 months prior to elections, said:

[Begin recording] [Quijano] I believe that all Panamanians should vote because we are a majority, but we must prove it at the ballot boxes and make election fraud more and more difficult to commit. I believe this is the call we must make to the Panamanian civic conscience, that this is the moment to go and vote to defend democracy, justice, and liberty.

[Reporter] The Panamanian people are concerned about what might happen following the May elections. The situation in the country is very bad from social, economic, and political points of view. What does the opposition really offer in the event that they come to power on 7 May?

[Quijano] I think Panamanians should feel confident that when we assume power the necessary plans will have been made to allow us to restructure the national economy and lead it down a new path of progress, development, social justice, and especially freedom.

[Reporter] How would you describe the invitation from General Manuel Antonio Noriega to visit the Panama Defense Forces' [PDF] headquarters?

[Quijano] I believe he has a right to invite all politicians to hold talks with him. I also believe it is not his or the PDF's business to meddle in politics. I believe the ADOC has given a categorical reply in regard to what we believe should be done at this time. I think he should also be called and asked to reconsider his position if we really want to rebuild the republic. [end recording]

Exitosa Station Owner Returns From Exile

PA2202134189 Panama City Cadena Exitosa in Spanish 1200 GMT 20 Feb 89

["Take Note" station editorial by Aris de Icaza]

[Excerpts] Greetings, Panamanian people. Greetings, Veraguas, Cocle, Herrera, Los Santos, Chiriqui, Colon, Darien, San Blas, Bocas del Toro, and Chorrera. Have a happy day and begin the week right. Today, you may say, is my 1st day. This is my return to Panama's free, democratic, and independent forum, following my arrival and... [pause] staying out of Panama against my will. [passage omitted]

Thank you Chorrera. Although we will not run this year, although we have been deprived of the opportunity to be elected by the majority of this country, we will serve, God willing, all your interests every day of the year, with the same interest, effort, and determination that moves us every day. [passage omitted]

We learned in the short time we have been back—3, 4, 5 days—that a lady such as Doris Vargas de Rosas [former Panama Province governor] unfortunately is not running. We have talented people here, people who are true assets to their parties. I do not understand why she was left out. I am learning others were left out. However, we do not know more. It is unfortunate people who are political assets, people who would be great in the Legislative Assembly defending the interests of their communities cannot give their best. We deeply regret it. We will be giving other names. [passage omitted]

At this station, we will be supporting the best, bravest, and most honest, and those who will unseat and bring to trial all the legislators who have not done anything at the Legislative Assembly. I heard an unspecified number of laws were approved, each costing a little over $1 million. What a way to waste the people's money! So, that is what we will do. As part of our great mission, we will begin a very great undertaking. [passage omitted]

We have also bought audio equipment and consoles from Super-Q radio station and in the United States. The equipment will arrive soon, so we can carry programs for our youth. We will create an image and raise the people's awareness on our duty and right to bring the truth to all those who will have to use that powerful weapon called the vote. We will begin a campaign called: Vote to be respected.

So, here we are friends. We are going to seek a man, as someone said. We are going to seek the best, as philosopher Diogenes said—remember? Day and night, he walked the roads of his native Greece with a lamp saying: We are seeking a man. He was not wasting his time or seeking just any man. He was trying to set his country on a definitive and the best course, which is why he felt the actions of a very special and most unusual man were needed. That man had to have morals and be honest, upright, just, and a friend to his friends and of the people. He had to be be a friend of unemployment and corruption [as heard] and a foe of everything bad. That is the sort of man who must rule this country: a friend. [passage omitted]

Today, we resume that long, permanent, almost solidarity, and difficult struggle we labeled "Take Note," broadcast by Cadena Exitosa. We resume the struggle based on our unflinching principles, which are truth, objectivity, and the courage to keep them alive to the end despite all difficulties. We have a fixed point of reference that serves as our guide, like a pole star in the immense sky of our concern as broadcasters. That fixed point, that guiding star, is called Panama!

Of course, this is politics. We are going to talk of politics and politicians. We will look at the highest political figures. We will subject them to our judgments, as citizens entitled to comment about people who hold the highest political posts. Some may be irked by our commentaries. We no longer care about that; we no longer care about that. Others may possibly be pleased, yet they will not owe us anything for our favorable opinions. They will have earned them with their deeds. Our listeners from throughout the country, from border to border, should know no favorable judgment will be bought. [passage omitted]

Civic Crusade Welcomes OAS Mission Visit

PA1802234189 Panama City Circuito RPC in Spanish 1700 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] One of the main National Civic Crusade spokesmen, Jose Mulino, believes the OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission delegation's visit to Panama could improve the current situation in the country.

[Begin Mulino recording] I believe the visit by the OAS Human Rights Commission delegation will be very beneficial. I think the the delegation's visit to Panama will be very positive because it is an opportunity to report to an international organization all the human rights violations perpetrated by the current regime, particularly over the course of the last 20 months.

This is one more opportunity for the opposition and for all civic sectors in the country to provide full details on each and every one of the various human rights violations that have been repeatedly committed by the government authorities. [end recording]

Argentina

Military Agreement With U.S. Signed

PY2202161389 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1336 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Feb (NA)—It was officially reported today that Argentina and the United States have signed an agreement implementing a program for the maintenance and refurbishing of U.S.-made armored vehicles and helicopters, as well as other Argentine Army materiel.

The program, which includes a $13-million loan, "epitomizes the excellent relations that bind the two countries and the democratic principles common to both nations."

It also constitutes a virtual resumption of military aid from Washington to Argentina. This supply was severed in 1979.

Argentine Army Chief of Staff General Francisco Gassino and General Fred Woerner, the Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, signed the agreement at the Argentine Defense Ministry last night, thus crowning a series of negotiations.

The U.S. Army will supply spare parts and other necessary items for the maintenance and refurbishing of military materiel, especially AM-113 armored vehicles and helicopters, according to the official report.

Military aid from the U.S. administration ceased in 1979 when the U.S. Congress approved the so-called "Humphrey- Kennedy" amendment that banned the sale of arms to countries that violated human rights.

A Defense Ministry communique states that "the signature of the memorandum constitutes the crowning point of a series of negotiations conducted by officials of the two governments, within the framework of the excellent bilateral relations that bind the two countries."

The program will include the disbursement of $13 million which will be used to "significantly increase the operational capabilities" of the Argentine Army, which is "one of the Government's basic objectives in the plan for the modernization of the Armed Forces."

Generals Woerner and Gassino signed the agreement in the presence of Argentine Defense Minster Horacio Jaunarena, U.S. Ambassador to Argentina, Theodore Gildred, Argentine Government officials, and members of the U.S. mission in Buenos Aires.

New Systems Not Included

PY2202193989 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 22 Feb 89 p 1

[Excerpts] Yesterday Brigade General Francisco Gassino, Army chief of staff, and General Fred Woerner, head of the U.S. Strategic Southern Command, signed an agreement by which the U.S. Army will supply spare parts for armored equipment and helicopters to the Argentine ground forces. [passage omitted]

The program does not include, however, the sale of new weapon systems to either the Argentine Army, Navy, or Air Force, because the United Kingdom has requested the U.S. Government to ban any such operations. [passage omitted]

Naval Prefecture Seizes Spanish Trawler

PY2202203989 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1953 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Feb (TELAM)—The Argentine Naval Prefecture this morning intercepted the Spanish ship "Sterio," which was fishing illegally in Argentine waters in the Atlantic Ocean. The ship was seized and ordered to Puerto Madryn.

The press office of the Argentine Naval Prefecture has reported that the ship was detained at 0930 by personnel of the Coast Guard vessel "26 Thompson," who found that the "Sterio" was carrying more than 350 kg of squid and 26 kg of cod.

The Spanish ship was intercepted exactly 197 nautical miles from the Isla Rasa lighthouse, within the 200-mile Argentine territorial exclusion zone.

Justicialist Platform on Defense Issue Disclosed

PY2202172789 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2002 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (NA)—The Justicialist Party [PJ] draft platform on defense matters proposes that the Armed Forces play a dissuasive role in case of an attack from abroad, and that they play the role of a "strategic reserve" at the disposal of the constitutional authorities "to contain and crush attacks of domestic origin, which, due to their seriousness, overwhelm the police and the security forces.

The draft does not mention the age limit for conscripts complying with the compulsory military service because the members of the commission that prepared the draft consider that this is a matter for open debate.

It took 6 months to prepare the draft that was disclosed to "NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS." The draft was prepared by the PJ Defense Commission that comprises vice presidential candidate Eduardo Duhalde; Senator

Liliana Gurdulich de Correa; Deputies Miguel Angel Toma and Luis Aranda; Colonel Simon Arguello, retired; Notary Public Hernan Patino Mayer; and Carlos Canon.

The preamble states that the Armed Forces have not "played an honorable and socially valuable role to play since democracy was restored and that their devotion to service has neither been recognized nor stimulated by those who have political control over them."

The draft emphasizes that the Armed Forces "spiritual and professional demoralization has seriously damaged their institutional cohesion, turning duty into a bureaucratic routine that breaks discipline and seriously damages their fitness for combat."

The draft adds that "the reconciliation of the Argentine society, an indispensable presupposition for national unity, cannot exclude the military men" because "a nation where the Armed Forces are estranged from a common project drawn up to meet the people's will is inconceivable."

The draft states that "the permanent duty of the Armed Forces is to be trained and ready to act as a member of the dissuasive power of the nation to ensure its sovereignty and satisfactorily resolve conflicts and attacks from abroad."

The document states that the Armed Forces "are also members of the strategic reserve of the state security system at the disposal of the constitutional authorities that can put down internal aggressions that become too large to be handled by the police and security organizations."

Military intelligence "in keeping with its specific duty, must be part of the national intelligence system which, under the political direction of the constitutional authorities, will carry out the national internal and external intelligence work."

"This system must be controlled by Congress to guarantee that it serves the interests of the state, without detriment of the rights and guarantees of the democratically organized community."

The PJ draft supports "the international desire to attain progressive international disarmament, but "it rejects the unilateral disarmament of the Latin American countries, because instead of contributing to disarmament it would worsen the strategic imbalance and dangerously reduce our dissuasive capacity." [quotation marks as received]

The document also advocates the "definite integration of the Armed Forces with the people, which is the basis of their origin and the reason for their existence." This is why, the document adds, "we demand that the Armed Forces to deeply study and become involved with the national objectives."

The PJ document stresses that "under no circumstances must the Armed Forces be subdued to party or sectorial interests except to those of the people."

After recalling "the sour experience of the Malvinas War as a result of the poor development of our national military industry and of our excessive dependence on foreign technology," the PJ document expresses "the legitimate need for the existence of a military industry to strengthen national autonomy, to promote the development of modern technology, to join a productive revolution to overcome our stagnancy and decadence, and to develop and appropriate military exportation policy."

Bolivia

Bedregal Denies Nicaraguan Arms Offer

PY2202140689 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 1130 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Guillermo Bedregal Gutierrez has denied that the Nicaraguan Government has offered arms in exchange for the Arava airplane. He said the Bolivian Government has not received any arms offer.

Bedregal said that the Bolivian Foreign Ministry has sent a note to the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry in which the Bolivian Government demands the prompt return of the Arava airplane. He added that if the Bolivian airplane is not quickly returned the Bolivian Government will submit a note to the La Hague International Court. In the note, the government will charge the Sandinist government with the retention of the Bolivian airplane.

The Arava airplane had been sent to Canada for repair. While returning to Bolivia it made an emergency landing in Managua, where it has been retained.

Legalization of Cocaine Production, Sale Proposed

PY2202235089 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 16 Feb 89 p 7

[Excerpts] The Bolivian Community Alternative (ACB) has proposed that the production and sale of cocaine be legalized, and it stated that if it assumes power it will raise at the United Nations the need to legalize cocaine in keeping with a properly designed plan.

This opinion was outlined by Remo Di Natale, Daniel Quevedo Villagomez, Rene Cabrera, Mario Sshonero Duran, and other major ACB leaders, who during a press conference described the bases and objective of the ACB program of government. The leaders also referred to the problem of cocaine trafficking.

ACB believes that is is "absolutely necessary" to end immediately the corruption caused by cocaine trafficking, because it is a scourge that has brought misfortune to the Bolivian people. [passage omitted]

The ACB leaders said that if cocaine production and sale are forbidden, groups that profit from drug addiction will benefit. On the contrary, if it is legalized, the funds earmarked for fighting the illegal traffic may be used for the rehabilitation of drug addicts. "The idea is to have legal, instead of illegal, drug addicts," Di Natale added. [passage omitted]

Correction to Electoral Registration Closing
PY2202190589

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Electoral Court Closes Registration Period," published in the 21 February Latin America DAILY REPORT, pages 43 to 44:

page 43, column two, third paragraph from bottom, only sentence make read: ...[Accion Humanistica Revolucionaria], Bolivian Community Alternative [Alternativa Comunitaria Boliviana], Barrientista National Unit...(correcting party name)

Brazil

Japan Agrees To Reschedule Debt Payment
PY2202025189 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2255 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The Japanese Government has agreed to reschedule $2.26 billion of the Brazilian foreign debt due between January 1985 and March 1990. The agreement has been reached after 3 days of negotiations, and this will probably allow Brazil to obtain new official and private loans from Japan.

Agriculture Minister Leaves for Belgium
PY2302010789 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Agriculture Minister Iris Rezende has left for Belgium. He will show representatives of the EEC the results of the federal government's nationwide struggle against foot-and-mouth disease.

[Begin Rezende recording] The delegation I am leading to Brussels, made up of technicians from the Agriculture Ministry, of congressmen, and of rural leaders, intends to discuss with EEC authorities the matter related to Brazilian meat exports to the European Community.

The suspension of exports by Brazil—except for the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Goias, Sao Paulo, and Espiritu Santo—will have a tremendous effect on the Brazilian economy, especially on the livestock sector.

The national program to fight animal diseases requires investments totaling $108 million. This program has already been implemented in 20 states, and it will give us an opportunity to campaign for the lifting of the restrictive measures, since we are on our way to eradicating the foot-and-mouth disease in our territory. [End recording]

The agriculture minister added that the trip has other objectives, such as seeking greater rapprochement with EEC countries, large importers of Brazilian agriculture and livestock products.

Two Factions Fight Over PMDB Leadership
PY2202223889 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 21 Feb 89 p A-6

[Text] The registration of two slates yesterday evening has made irreversible the dispute between the two factions seeking to control the PMDB: the progovernment faction, whose "Unity Slate" is headed by Social Security Minister Jader Barbalho, and the "PMDB Commitment" slate, headed by Deputy Ulysses Guimaraes, who has been leading the PMDB since 1971. The elections will be held on 12 March at the end of a national convention that will open 2 days earlier with a discussion of a new PMDB platform.

This is the second time in its short 23-year history that the PMDB—initially named MDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement]—will be split in two factions at a national convention to elect its next leaders. In 1971 Guimaraes led a "moderate" slate against an "authentic" slate of the then MDB. Just the opposite is happening now. Guimaraes is heading a slate supported by groups ranging from the PCB [Brazilian Communist Party] to the "Centrao" [a centrist group]. Its primary support, however, comes from supporters of the former "authentic" slate.

The "Unity Slate" will be headed by a supporter of the former "authentic" slate, Minister Jader Barbalho. The "Unity Slate," however, is basically made up of the most conservative PMDB sectors, which describe as "electoral opportunism" their opponents' call to break with the government just before a presidential election.

Barbalho, Agriculture Minister Iris Rezende, and Education Minister Carlos Sant'Anna have denied that the group intends to quit the PMDB if it loses at the convention. On the contrary, the purpose of the group is to conduct subsequent negotiations over the composition of the National Executive Board, which actually governs the PMDB.

Sant'Anna has confirmed that the "Unity Slate" expects the support of members of the "PMDB Commitment" slate when the composition of the National Executive Board is discussed. Industrial Development Minister Roberto Cardoso Alves has said that 30 percent of the opponent slate will then support his group.

The progovernment slate includes 6 ministers, 5 governors, and 80 congressmen. All the ministers who are PMDB members have been included in the progovernment slate with the exception of Civilian Household Chief Ronaldo Costa Couto. He has stayed out at the suggestion of President Sarney, because his inclusion would identify the slate too much with the government.

Paraguay

HOY Publisher Leaves Country for Brazil

PY2302024289 Asuncion Cerro Cora Sistema Nacional Television in Spanish 2250 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] After spending several days under house arrest, Humberto Dominguez Dibb—who told the press he did not know the reasons for his arrest—this afternoon unexpectedly left the country amid a wave of speculation concerning his arrest and departure.

Reinaldo Dominguez Dibb gave our station the following explanation for his brother Humberto's departure.

[Begin Reinaldo Dominguez Dibb recording] After undergoing medical treatment some time ago in Brazil, Humberto returned to our country and was well for awhile. Then he had a relapse and his health again deteriorated. All this coincided with the recent events in our country. His departure is in no way related to any political situation. Humberto is well known for being outspoken; some times he speaks his mind and later corrects himself. I want to make it clear that his departure was prompted by personal reasons, not political ones. [end recording]

The clip shows the takeoff of a 767 Varig jetliner that is taking Humberto Dominguez Dibb to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. [passage omitted]

It has been reported that Reinaldo Dominguez Dibb has taken over as publisher of the newspaper HOY. [passage omitted]

New 30-Day Registration Period Announced

PY2202204889 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 22 Feb 89 pp 8, 9

[Excerpt] Yesterday, Edgar L. Ynsfran, vice president of the Colorado Party Executive Board, said that all citizens who are not registered in the electoral offices will be allowed to register and vote in the 1 May elections.

"The Government has decided to allow everyone to register," Ynsfran said at the end of a meeting with Justice Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken yesterday.

The period for new registrations will last 30 days. The government decree will be signed today, the source said.

Ynsfran said that there will not be enough time to clean the existing electoral registration lists and that the task will have to be done later, after the institutional reorganization of the Republic.

Neither will there be any substantial reform to the current electoral law, although some amendments will be introduced—such as the elimination of the 10,000-signature requirement for the recognition of a political party. This amendment will allow the Christian Democratic Party to participate. The new registration period will also serve to complete the national civic registration list.

Ynsfran said another amendment would eliminate the ban on electoral coalitions, but he added that "the National Accord as such cannot participate in the election." [passage omitted]

Public Rallies Banned in Downtown Asuncion

PY2202231789 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 22 Feb 89 p 12

[Text] Through a communique released this morning, the Interior Ministry guaranteed the people's right to meet peacefully and banned public rallies in downtown Asuncion.

The communique, which is signed by Interior Minister Division General Orlando Machuca Vargas, states: "In keeping with the terms of Article 76 of the Constitution, which guarantees the people's right to meet peacefully, and which orders that public order and the rights of third parties be protected, the Interior Ministry hereby makes it known that no public rallies shall be authorized in the area between Estados Unidos, Colon, Fulgencio R. Moreno, Humaita, and Costanera Streets, in order to guarantee the normal movement of people and vehicles in downtown Asuncion."

Chief of Public Order Department Designated

PY2202203289 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 22 Feb 89 p 24

[Summary] Police Inspector General Artemio Monges Ocampos has been designated chief of the Public Order Department of the police. Monges Ocampos replaces Inspector General Eladio Aquino Cazal.

Peru

Foreign Minister on WASHINGTON POST Article

PY2202145389 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Luis Gonzalez Posada today labeled as bad journalism the article published by the WASHINGTON POST in which it said that the U.S. Government prevented a coup in Peru last January. Gonzalez said that the report was based on rumors.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] What is your reaction to an article published by the WASHINGTON POST in which it is said that the U.S. Government allegedly opposed a coup in our country?

[Gonzalez] It is just speculation by the WASHINGTON POST. I read the article that says that even the date, hour and minute of the coup had been established. Like I said it is a press speculation and I strongly reject it for various

reasons. I reject it out of respect for our constitutional Armed Forces. Our Armed Forces respect the law, the state of law in Peru. They should not be stained by this type of attack. Our officers cannot be put in a position where they have to knock on the doors of foreign embassies to ask for authorization to interrupt a constitutional government. It is a regrettable article. It is not true because democracy is firm in Peru.

We need to make a great effort to strengthen democracy. The people should draw a national project to give continuity to development. Peru is a country that cannot be built, and then rebuilt every 5 years. We must reach an agreement on basic issues such as energy, health, and education in order to push the country ahead in the same direction, no matter what government is in power. There will always be a constitutional government in Peru with the full support of the constitutional Armed Forces that are organized in accordance with the military echelon and are respectful of the national juridical order. This is why the WASHINGTON POST article is mere speculation. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Villanueva Comments on Situation in Ayacucho

PY2202143489 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Armando Villanueva del Campo made an unexpected visit to Ayacucho to implement measures to help that city to return to normal.

Villanueva headed a delegation which included the defense and labor ministers. They spoke to the population, giving them words of encouragement and confidence in the government and the Armed Forces. Villanueva told the people not to be scared by the strike ordered by Shining Path.

Villanueva returned to the capital in the afternoon after making an evaluation of his activities in the emergency zone. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Passage omitted] [Reporter] Are the Armed Forces in full control of the Ayacucho zone?

[Villanueva] Yes they are. This morning a military unit was ambushed on its way to relieve another unit. One soldier was killed and three others were wounded. Today we visited the wounded in the hospital.

[Reporter] Were any civilians involved?

[Villanueva] No. The military convoy was ambushed on the highway. A land mine exploded but thanks to a maneuver by the driver more casualties were avoided.

[Reporter] What is your opinion about this zone affected by violence?

[Villanueva] I believe that violence is being defeated by the strategy of the government and the Armed Forces. The Armed Forces and the Military-Political Command are implementing social, political, and economic actions which are reducing subversive activities. These government actions are reducing the conditions under which subversion develops.

[Reporter] What would you say to the people about the violence prevailing in the country?

[Villanueva] We need unity, courage and decision. There should be no distinction between APRA, Communists, Popular Christian Party, Popular Action or United Left members in that we should all unite against terrorism. Terrorism is not a revolutionary force. Terrorism is a regressive force. It is not identified with historic achievements.

The great revolutions that changed humanity were not terrorist actions but social revolutions. This is why I would like to remind the Peruvian people that we are in a revolutionary process, regionalization is the basis of the current revolution. [end recording]

Peasant Leader Blanco Still Under Arrest

PY2202195089 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0204 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Lima, 21 Feb (EFE)—Peruvian leftist Senator Javier Diez Canseco today charged that the antiterrorist police force has disregarded a prosecutor's order to release peasant leader and former guerrilla Hugo Blanco, who was arrested on 9 February.

Diez Canseco, a member of the executive board of the "United Left" (IU)—a coalition of Marxist parties that is the main opposition sector—said that the Antiterrorist Directorate (DIRCOTE) "refused" to release Blanco, despite the fact that the prosecutor of the 35th District ordered his release last Monday.

Diez Canseco said that Blanco, who is the coordination secretary for the Peruvian Peasant Confederation, today was "clandestinely" removed from the Lima prefecture (the civilian government) "to evade the court action."

Ten Power Pylons Knocked Down by 'Terrorists'

PY2302024489 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Ten high-voltage power pylons were knocked down last night in a series of terrorist attacks, interrupting the electric power supply in Lima and coastal towns between Marcona and Chiclayo. The pylons are now being repaired by crews of Electroperu [Peruvian State Electric Power Enterprise].

Czechoslovak Trade Minister Concludes Visit

PY2202171989 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Josef Rab, Czechoslovak minister of trade and tourism, early this morning concluded a brief visit to our capital. He came here to study what products Peruvian producers can offer his country.

In the brief hours Rab was in Lima he was able to meet with representatives of the Peruvian Exporters Association and the Foreign Trade Institute. Rab told them his government wants to strengthen bilateral trade.

(Stanislav Bisora), charge d'affaires of the Czechoslovak Embassy, said that Rab told the members of the association and the institute that there is a demand for Peruvian traditional and nontraditional products in Czechoslovakia.

Venezuela

Perez Interviewed on Political, Economic Issues

PA1402121289 Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 8 Feb 89 pp 26-A, 27-A

["Exclusive" interview with President Carlos Andres Perez by Djuka Julius at Miraflores Palace in Caracas; date not given]

[Text] [Julius] Mr President, you are beginning your second presidential term in Venezuela. What are the differences between your first term and this one? What has changed?

[Perez] There are two basic differences: First, Venezuela today is not the same in any way because all the economic and social circumstances have changed, thanks to the transformations made by democracy in the country and the transformations that I personally as president was able to bring about. Second, myself. I have not changed but my personal experiences are different, as is the experience I have acquired. This gives me a broader perspective for my upcoming work as president.

[Julius] Do you still consider yourself a populist, and what does the term populist mean to you?

[Perez] I have always fought labels intended to discredit someone or some faction and to legitimize another. Populism is the antithesis of developmentism [desarrollismo], and if I had to choose between the two terms, I would choose populism and not developmentism. However, there is really no serious political faction that could be called populist.

If populism means being a demagogue, not looking out for the country's real interests, and irresponsibly distributing the nation's resources, then no one would claim to be a populist. That does not define a government philosophy, and it is absolutely false.

On the other hand, if populism means looking after the interests of the majority, fairly distributing wealth, and seeking social justice in every corner of the country, then I would call myself a populist. I reject these labels, as well as the leftist or rightist labels. Left only implies a location in space, as does the right. We have defined leftist sectors as progressive and rightest sectors as retrograde. We can accept the appropriateness of these labels, but I have never been able to understand what is meant by populist.

[Julius] Mr President, can populism, as you understand it—work for the popular interests, development with this purpose in mind—go hand in hand with a modernization of the country?

[Perez] Yes, because this is the modernization of the country. What has been the classic style of governing? What have been the styles of government that have been used in all our democracies? They have been essentially to voluntarily or involuntarily favor the privileged sectors and to let themselves be carried along by the pressure groups. This cannot be allowed in an authentic democracy. Therefore—without hurting the country's interests, without detriment to the necessary accumulation of wealth for reinvestment—I intend to protect lower income sectors and seek a fairer distribution of wealth.

That is why I say now that my cabinet will no longer have just an economic team; it will have a socioeconomic team, because one cannot separate the creation and projection of the economy from its goal of serving society.

The modernization of the production system is indispensable to reach a satisfactory production level, but the reason for modernizing the production system is to achieve social justice.

[Julius] Mr President, you consider yourself a modern social democrat. What is the ideological and political significance of you being vice president of the Socialist International?

[Perez] The truth is that little attention is paid to ideologies these days. I do not believe that ideologies have disappeared, as the pragmatists have been trying to demonstrate, but there is now a broader concept. The dogmatism that political doctrines were born with have been giving way to a greater rationalization of ideas. Today socialism does not necessarily have to be tied to Marxism.

I consider myself, under the terminology in use, a man of the left, a man situated in the social democratic sector. I do not pay homage to Marxism, but I do see that democratic socialism has to be oriented toward authentic social justice and a fair distribution of wealth, while at the same time projecting its actions beyond the national borders since humanity's struggle is a single struggle and all of us must help to achieve development with social justice.

Moreover, I think our brand of social democracy must try to gradually expand its actions in the region, based on the conviction that social and economic debates and confrontations take place not on a regional level but at a much higher level.

That is why Latin American integration and an active role in the Third World's struggle is part of my ideology and thinking.

[Julius] Tell me, Mr President, does Latin America's version of social democracy have a future in this part of the world? What are your views on it, considering we are entering a phase of reform?

[Perez] I believe social democracy is the political and intellectual concept that most closely reflects our people's practical achievements and their situation. One of the most important reasons is that social democracy has abandoned dogmatism. We are dealing with so-called dogmatic Marxist-Leninist, Social Christian, and Christian Democratic parties. Social democracy alone remains as a wide area for progressive action.

That is why I have also said we identify with social democratic parties, not because they call themselves socialist democratic, but because of their views on progress, development, and international relations.

[Julius] Regardless of what they are called....?

[Perez] Regardless of what those parties are called. Furthermore, the term socialism has a lot of connotations in our region. These connotations come from the errors by the parties that call themselves socialist. The connotations come from having been the target of a ruthless discrediting campaign by sources outside the region, local extreme right-wing groups and dictatorships—which turned socialism into their leitmotif for existing—and by the United States, which for a long time used them as an excuse for its meddling in the region.

[Julius] Mr Perez, can we refer to the program you are proposing to implement in Venezuela as a kind of Venestroyka?

[Perez] I hope to do something similar. We must get rid of all the established concepts that have guided our nations. We must act with daring to implement a genuine modernization. We must stop being afraid of sectors and groups in our societies that have taken upon themselves the right to think and judge.

All these things entail an in-depth transformation. However, they do not mean we are going to undergo revolutions that would bring extreme clashes in our society. We must understand this has to be an evolutionary process.

[Julius] You are proposing Venezuelans make a concerted effort to achieve those objectives. I have the impression you are facing difficulties from the start. Is there any possibility of a true concerted effort in Venezuela?

[Perez] We must differentiate between two sorts of situations.

The policy we will implement is at odds with existing interests, which are trying to discredit the ruling party and take advantage of any situation—unfortunately, without caring about the country's interests. If they think they enhance their standing with the public by rejecting any government action, they do it. So, a concerted effort will be harder, and we cannot harbor any false hopes. However, we must not abandon or renounce it; instead, we have to make a concerted effort to make profound changes and modernize the structure of the Venezuelan state and political parties. I think I will succeed in this respect, but it will be more difficult to make a concerted effort with the political parties.

Here is an example: We have had a very unpleasant and uncomfortable dispute with our neighbor, Colombia, which compels us to resume relations and talks, because we cannot ignore the problem. On the occasion of my inauguration, I simply proposed to Colombian President Barco a method to begin the talks. It does not involve any kind of commitment for the country, just a method.

However, the major opposition party has said it is a very serious matter for the country to have the president reach a decision on this matter. I have not decided on anything. We will have to discuss the decisions, which will stem from the method used to discuss the problems, with political parties and major sectors of the country. But then you have what is happening now....

Therefore, it will be very difficult but not impossible to have a concerted effort. It will not be necessary to reach an agreement with them on some things because they will not accept them. Other things, such as the border issue, will have to be discussed with them no matter what, because without an agreement we cannot do anything. A concerted effort will be easier for some other things because it will be very hard for the political parties to refuse to accept certain profound changes in the Venezuelan state, something we call state reform.

A concerted effort with what I call sectors of the civilian population will be difficult and yet more likely. Civilian society is in essence a conflict of interests. Trying to identify those interests and diminish them is what a concerted effort among the various groups of the civilian population must entail.

So, I think I will be able to reach an agreement in the economic area with union, business, and government sectors. It is essential to reach that agreement because of the country's current situation and because of the very difficult measures I will have to deal with.

I cannot start worrying whether a decision I make will be accepted by a specific sector or group. I must be certain the decision is essential and hope it is recognized as such in the long-term. I cannot hesitate because otherwise I would not be doing what Venezuela really expects me to do. The important thing is for my actions to meet the expectations surrounding my administration.

I also plan to reach agreements in other areas. I plan to reach an agreement in the field of science, because we cannot advance without bringing Venezuela into the scientific and technological process. I also plan to reach an agreement in the field of culture because we must regard culture as an essential part of man's progress. If we abandon these essential aspects we are creating a false progress.

I will seek cooperation on an international level. Latin American integration must move forward come hell or high water. This will be the do all and be all of my government.

[Julius] It would seem, Mr President, that Latin America's crisis has ripened these concepts, and not only in Venezuela. Economic and social cooperation is under way in Mexico, President Alfonsin is attempting it in Argentina, and President Sarney has done the same lately in Brazil. It could be said that at present in Latin America—as a result of the crisis—national consensus is a must....

[Perez] We have discussed that point. At present there are no left-wing or right-wing measures. At present we must make sure that pragmatism will not make us forget our fundamental goals: well-being and social justice. We must, however, use mechanisms that will allow us to immediately achieve those goals in order to renew our country's economic process.

Thus, at any given time we may see the conflicts of interest commonly found in capitalist society ended or made tolerable. Businessmen are thus forced to make concessions to the labor sector, on which they must rely to ensure progress. The labor sector, meanwhile, must also surrender the enforcement of certain contractual advantages which would be considered essential under normal circumstances. This is what is currently happening in every phase of life in our countries. A large field has been opened for cooperation with specific goals in sight.

I do not accept the theory that dictatorships are the best at dealing with economic problems because they can—without any misgivings whatsoever—adopt measures and impose them, thus resolving situations very quickly. I believe such solutions are artificial because they are made against the people's will, without seeking the opinion or cooperation of the various social sectors.

I prefer my way even though the cost for society and people, and in terms of popularity, is much higher, and even though I must, on a daily basis, explain why I may have to adopt certain harsh and unavoidable economic measures. I do not plan to lock myself up inside Miraflores [presidential palace]. When the people start judging the measures I have adopted, I will be in the streets and all over the country defending my policies and proving that I will responsibly confront the situations that may emerge.

[Julius] Mr President, you mentioned the problem of Latin American cooperation. What do you think the Group of Eight's future tasks should be?

[Perez] I believe the Group of Eight is one of the most fortunate initiatives that has been implemented during the last part of this century. Latin America has been suffering the consequences of clumsiness, errors, and selfishness, and after receiving so many blows and having so many frustrations, it has recognized the need for unity and cooperation.

I would have liked this to have happened 20 years ago, because it would have saved us from much of the suffering and difficulties our peoples are currently enduring. However, the important point is that there is now a new reality in Latin America.

I have always called attention to something that we seem to want to forget: The importance of the Malvinas incident in the creation of this new Latin America. It was during the Malvinas conflict that the Latin American awareness began, which is when we began to realize that no one will do for us what we ourselves have to do. Those sentimental feelings that used to prevail in the region no longer exist, and this is very important.

The Contadora Group emerged after the Malvinas conflict to assume a Latin American stance with regard to the Central American crisis. The Support Group was created after Contadora, and later the Group of Eight was established. Then from the Group of Eight came Esquipulas, with the direct participation of the Central American countries. Later came the Acapulco meeting, which gave greater importance to the participation of the seven countries [included in the Group of Eight], which are the most important in Latin America as far as population and wealth are concerned.

[Julius] Mr President, once I said that what Bolivar never achieved was attained through the debt; in other words, the unity of Latin America. Based on this, are you on the front line in the struggle to solve the debt problem? What are your views on this?

[Perez] You have said the truth. Bolivar was able to unite Latin American feelings and actions for political independence, and Latin Americans were able to see this thanks to the effects of the French Revolution on our region. All progressive men at that time saw this. However, the problems of the real world, where actions are not carried out through military force but economic force, had not yet been seen by the peoples in our region.

However, the tragedy we are experiencing, the errors we have committed, have allowed us, fortunately, to see this new reality. This is the great thing, and this is what history has taught us.

During the evolution of mankind, we see that not one important event occurred during a time of peace. It has always been during times of crisis in a society or of mankind at large that the greatest developments have taken place. This is what we have to look at. One has to see further than the end of one's nose. We must see that this crisis, no matter how deep it may be, is good; it will bring benefits to us.

Julius, you have heard me repeat many times a saying I learned in Cuba when I was in exile during Perez Jimenez' dictatorship: Things are getting better because they have become so bad.

[Julius] You recently talked to President Bush, IMF Director Camdesus, and many other of your counterparts and political friends, and not only your friends but also your partners I would say, in the international arena. Do you actually believe that in the North they are giving some thought to the idea that it is necessary to solve the debt problem in a different way?

[Perez] I believe I made a confession during my inaugural address. I thought that during my first speech as president I should not outline the main aspects of my policies or to limit my speech to Venezuelan issues, because the solution to our problems is not in Venezuela. This is why in my inaugural address I outlined my view of the world as it is seen in Venezuela these days. Then, I discussed the possible relations of Venezuelans, as well as Latin Americans, with that world, and relations between Venezuela and the rest of Latin America.

In other words, today I see a world that is the product of a permanent confrontation, of the arrogance displayed by World War II winners and losers, whose great scientific discoveries made them believe that they were the masters not just of people but of nature, the universe. When faced with reality, they realized that global cooperation and solidarity are essential. These are the most essential concepts.

The United States, with all its might, launched a new crusade at the beginning of the Reagan era. It revived the Middle Ages in its claim that the demon is in the East and that the West's objective is to destroy the East. This plan was dashed to pieces. There is no more talk about Star Wars. Despite its might, the U.S. economy has suffered severely, and the United States is now considering the necessity of making profound changes.

The USSR, in its isolation, thought that it could build a great nation to face the West, and suddenly it realized that isolation and other factors restricted progress. The two superpowers have been forced to admit that they need, if only temporarily, time out to recover strength, and therefore they must bring detente to all regional conflicts.

This gives Latin America its big chance; a chance for Latin Americans. If we do not act foolishly, if we meet our generation's demands for the future of our America, we will forge ahead.

I said this to Daniel Ortega and Fidel Castro during our lengthy talks here in Venezuela on the Latin American crisis. I told them that we have a great responsibility, that it would be a grave mistake not to solve the Central American crisis in our own way.

[Julius] Was any progress made during the talks on problems in Central America? What is your assessment of the situation?

[Perez] I want to believe that yes, our dialogue was so frank that even the harshest things were said in a most cordial manner among the other Central American presidents and Daniel Ortega and among the Central American presidents and Commander Fidel Castro.

i believe that we made important progress, because an exchange of views is of primary importance, and we have reached an extraordinary understanding. It is now up to the two superpowers, which have managed to have enough political resolve to bring about the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the signing of a peace accord between South Africa, Angola, and Cuba, to start talks with 'Arafat—which was inconceivable given the situation in the United States.... [sentence as published] We must demand that they also have enough political resolve to end their participation in the Central American conflict, because we are sure that Latin America could find a resolution to the conflict through dialogue and democracy.

[Julius] Mr President, what kind of role should the United States play in the dialogue?

[Perez] In my meeting with President Bush, I frankly and straightforwardly discussed the situation over the past few years. Although I did not expect or request a categorical reply from the President of the United States, I was pleased when I sensed that there was some understanding of these ideas.

If I spent the right amount of time and showed sufficient prudence and firmness on any issue during my inaugural speech, it was defining our relations with the United States by stating that we hope for a dynamic and fruitful relationship between the United States and Latin America. We will now give it time, but we will not wait idly. We will stay active.

[Julius] Do you feel that we can hope for a more flexible and realistic U.S. position on Central America?

[Perez] I believe so. Moreover, I am sure that it will not be long before we Latin American presidents can sit down with President Bush to discuss mutual problems as good friends and responsible people of this hemisphere.

[Julius] Do you believe that Bush will give diplomacy a chance in Central America?

[Perez] I believe so. In fact, this would be the continuation of policy. President Bush was President Reagan's vice president. Mr Baker was President Reagan's right-hand man. They implemented a policy that delivered all it could and failed to deliver what it should. Therefore a change is needed. That is the advantage of democracy: the cyclical process, the constitutionally mandated periods in office that foster reconsideration. We are absolutely confident that this will happen. I believe that Bush's Central American policy will undergo realistic changes.

[Julius] What do think of the U.S. position on the debt?

[Perez] Many interests are at stake. There is right now a conflict between European and U.S. banks, between the U.S. Federal Reserve and U.S. banks. There are disagreements between the EEC and the United States and Japan. There are always conflicts in societies, and here we are speaking about the world community. I believe that all of these global crises which have led to this detente—the first important one that has occurred since World War II—will result in a solution to the debt.

The debt is strictly a political problem that will give rise to other very serious problems, not only for us but for industrialized nations, which will find themselves involved in the debt problem. This leads me to conclude that 1989 will be the year of great solutions to the problem of the debt.

[Julius] How would you relate the interests of debtors to those of creditors?

[Perez] Creditors need markets; they need to improve their economies. It is a matter of life or death, of preventing another recession. In order to create these markets, debtors need resources; they need to revive development. That leads to one situation after another and, as a matter of course, to a solution of the debt problem.

We never said that we would not pay; that would be foolish. First, a debtor must never say that he will not pay—even if he cannot pay or if he will not pay, because he could be subject to an embargo and an expropriation. That must be avoided.

[Julius] Mr President, I noticed during your inauguration that Latin American presidents were deeply concerned about the presence of great economic blocs, some in the process of creation and others already in operation. Is this a big concern for Latin America?

[Perez] This brings us back to the idea that things are so bad that they have to get better. Latin Americans, indifferent and steeped in the paternalism under which we have lived, felt that no problems existed because we had the United States on our side and because the market was secure. The people must now realize that a different situation prevails.

The United States and Canada combined their markets because otherwise the United States would have been unable to face the EEC and Japan. Therefore, three great markets exist in the world, and these markets have begun to talk among themselves and are attempting to become self-sufficient. This could have drastic consequences for us, because if the three markets work together, we would be left out. If we are left out, we would become poorer; and if we become poorer we would become more and more dependent. So what must we do now? We must now begin to carefully analyze the situation and struggle to become part of the great world markets.

We have already begun talks with [Spanish Prime Minister] Felipe Gonzalez about the EEC. We must seek broader terms of agreement with the United States. I believe that the OAS can become the effective organization that the United States needs by bringing together the two great regions in the Western Hemisphere, by which I mean the North and the South. Canada and the United States should meet at the OAS with the Latin American and Caribbean countries that comprise SELA. We should establish areas of possible consensus and discuss our inevitable differences.

[Julius] Does this mean that Latin America must unite to have a dialogue and become strong to negotiate?

[Perez] I would say that we must be firm without being dogmatic. We must tell the truth in such a way that it should not cause controversy. We must say that Latin America has no future if it does not unite. We must say that Latin America will become one of the great international forces in the next century if it unites.

[Julius] Mr President, political developments are apparently proving that your idea is correct. The world is becoming increasingly multipolar. Do you think Latin America can also become an important world power?

[Perez] This is important. With the rise of China, Japan, and the EEC in the seventies and with the active presence of the Nonaligned Movement and the Group of 77, we thought the day of the multipolar world had arrived.

Then, during the eighties, there was a violent shift and bipolarism became dominant again. We thought that we were heading in that direction once more. All multinational organizations had weakened. Our developing countries felt more and more abandoned. Our own selfishness as nations led to our misfortune.

However, it so happens that the latest deserters of the dual power concept—which through their confrontation caused a dramatic situation that almost led to World War III—have now created a stable situation characterized by multipolarism.

The EEC, which was once only an idea, is now a vocal power. Japan has fully consolidated its power. China is taking its place on the international scene with a real chance to make its voice heard. The socialist world is finding itself forced to make so many reforms that it is drawing closer to the West, and the East-West confrontation is becoming less strident.

Therefore, a multipolar world has been born. There is room in it for us, and it is highly probable that we can become one of the powers capable of intervening to make the world more balanced and just and the superpowers less overbearing.

[Julius] This is only if we unite, is it not?

[Perez] There is no other way.

[Julius] Mr President, do you still consider yourself a Third World man?

[Perez] This was another term whose mere mention was almost considered to be in poor taste, and I was the only one who dared bring it up every once in a while. Today the situation is different. One can perceive through the South Commission—another result of this situation—that developing countries are becoming active again. The Third World exists and is a clear, decisive factor. What happened was that all the tragedies we endured divided and scattered us. The Group of 77 became an island unto itself. The Nonaligned Movement was wracked with indecision and its meetings were full of rhetoric.

A new situation exists today, and the Third World now appears to be an effective power and a tangible reality. I hope that during the first 2 years of this decade, we will be in a better position than we were in 1974—in other words, during the first half of the 1970's.

[Julius] Mr President, you mentioned during your news conference that the struggle for a new world economic system must be revived. Why do you think this struggle is once again valid?

[Perez] Because it has been demonstrated that we were right when we charged that the system created in Breton Woods and Havana after World War II was only useful to and served the interests of large nations, of the world's economic powers, and that it left two-thirds of humanity lagging behind in an intolerable situation. This has been demonstrated. It has also been demonstrated that it [the world economic system] is useless to those nations which created it. Therefore, things have to be rearranged in the world. This is becoming obvious even at the GATT, where we are losing our fears. The GATT is another organization invented by the major industrial nations to serve their interests.

Well, all this could now be changed, and Latin America and all developing nations now have their chance. There are encouraging signs that the Nonaligned Movement and the Group of 77 are becoming active again. We must create a Third World bloc.

[Julius] Mr President, why did you submit a new request for Venezuela's admission as a full-fledged member of the Nonaligned Movement?

[Perez] Because we not only have to define ourselves with words, but ready ourselves for action. The Nonaligned Movement was the spark, the impulse that led the Third World to discover that we have a right to combine our efforts and to become a decisive voice in the international arena.

[Julius] Mr President, how would you assess Venezuela's relations with Mexico? You have twice held lengthy talks with President Salinas de Gortari and you proposed economic cooperation between the two countries.

[Perez] You heard my statements at the news conference. It was perhaps undiplomatic of me to mention the two countries together, but I believe we should be more familiar with each other, that as true neighbors there should be greater confidence between us, and that we should all be pleased that both governments find rapprochement and true integration essential.

I have great confidence in what President Salinas de Gortari said, because he spoke not merely out of courtesy but with the deep conviction that today more than ever Mexico must be integrated into Latin America. I told Salinas that as far as Venezuela is concerned, Mexico and Brazil are essential to Latin American unity.

[Julius] Mr President, can it be said that based on historical precedent, Mexico's geopolitical position, and fundamental common interests, Mexico and Venezuela are natural allies?

[Perez] Mexico has had a border worthy of Latin America; it has maintained our border, and it has taught us to have pride in that border, to share in its responsibilities. We are united by many things and divided by nothing. I agree with you, therefore, that we are natural allies.

[Julius] Mr President, do you think that the similarities between Carlos Salinas de Gortari's modernization program and Carlos Andres Perez' offer an additional link between Venezuela and Mexico?

[Perez] During my visit to Mexico, I found that there were in fact many similar ideas in Salinas' speech and mine. I was pleasantly surprised by those similarities. I believe they draw us closer together.

[Julius] Mr President, at your news conference you asked Fidel Castro to get closer, to become more involved in Latin American politics. Does this involve Cuba's return to the OAS? What was his reaction?

[Perez] I view Cuba without prejudice, although it was I who led Venezuela's harshest and most difficult struggle in history when there was an attempt to wage guerrilla warfare in Venezuela with Castro's participation.

I will always remember a statement made by Mao Tse Tung when he emerged victorious. He said: "Any political leader unable to reconcile with former adversaries does not deserve to be a leader anywhere."

I have tried to follow that adage, and my relations with Castro have developed gradually. I know our positions are completely different, that Venezuela is not in any way involved with communism, that Venezuela is not heading toward that. Nevertheless, within the framework of democratic pluralism, I respect Cuba's presence in Latin America.

I have critcized Castro for his current position at a time when in the USSR communism's great modernization is under way, when Gorbachev's perestroyka has left behind Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, which had anchored the USSR to a regressive policy. My friend Castro is now saying that he is the last Marxist-Leninist left in the world. I am surprised by such conservatism in an intelligent, brilliant man, whom I would like to see increasingly involved in Latin America's democratic process, which would be to our benefit.

[Julius] Was there anything in his reaction to indicate whether or not he would join the OAS?

[Perez] I believe Fidel Castro has shown maturity and extraordinary experience. Although his position and mine are quite opposite, he is a great Latin American leader. I believe Cuba's gradual adherence is necessary; it has already joined SELA, and I believe we should make the OAS an organization for America's two regions, thus righting the mistaken view that America is a single region.

America is a geographic region, a hemisphere, but it is composed of two regions that are economically, culturally, and politically different. These regions must be defined, and they should both find in the OAS a forum in which to air their problems and define their interests. In such an OAS, Fidel Castro and I would be equally comfortable. Castro himself has said in public that he is willing to return to the OAS if the Latin American countries propose Cuba's return.

[Julius] Thank you very much, Mr President.

Guyana

Announcement on Surinamese President's Visit

FL2102164189 Bridgetown CANA in English 2238 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Feb 20, CANA—Surinamese President Ramsewak Shankar will pay an official visit to neighbouring Guyana March 20-21 [dates as received] at the invitation of President Desmond Hoyte, the government announced.

An official statement said Shankar would be accompanied by his wife and a team of officials.

Discussions are expected to focus on the present state of bilateral relations and a review of the existing programmes of cooperation between the two countries. "The heads of state are also expected to exchange views on important developments in the regional and international spheres, particularly with regard to issues of mutual concern," the official statement said.

"Both Guyana and Suriname attach great importance to this visit which it is hoped will contribute to the further strengthening of the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries," it added. Relations between the two neighbours, on the north eastern shoulder of the South American mainland, have never been strong, despite several attempts.

It is believed that a still unresolved territorial dispute over the new river triangle, an area controlled by Guyana in the south west bordering Suriname and Brazil, though on the back burner for several years, has been largely responsible for the cool relations. Guyana is, meanwhile, known to be concerned about the level of contraband trade between the two countries. Officials here believe that local rice and sugar are being smuggled into Suriname, while other commodities such as split peas and potatos are smuggled into Guyana from Suriname.

On March 3-4 Brazil's President Jose Sarney will make the first visit here by a Brazilian head of state.

Rice Shortfall Precludes Export to Europe, Cuba

FL1702134089 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] A top Guyanese official says his country will not be able to export rice to Europe and Cuba. The official blamed the production shortfall on weather, plant disease, and smuggling. Trade and Tourism Minister Winston Murray met with journalists yesterday to brief them on the supply situation which affects essential consumer items such as rice, sugar, petroleum products, and flour. Rice is the third largest foreign exchange earner behind bauxite and sugar in Guyana.

Goods Shortages Explained

FL1802160589 Bridgetown CANA in English 1438 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Feb 18, CANA—Guyana's trade and tourism minister, Winston Murray, has partly blamed "a high incidence of hoarding and smuggling" of sugar and rice for consumers difficulties in getting supplies.

Murray also said that the current shortage of flour was unlikely to be corrected before the beginning of April but the unavailability of petroleum products, mainly gasoline, should return to normal soon. The gas shortage, caused by the late arrival of a tanker from Curacao, has been eased. Government officials reported that last Wednesday's shipment would have been followed Friday by a second and a third on Monday.

Murray said during a briefing of reporters that government will be enforcing an order prohibiting the sale of essential goods by hucksters. The briefing was called amidst growing concern here about the shortage and high prices of basic commodities including rice, flour and edible oil, which led last week to work stoppages in the sugar belt. Murray said that at the moment there were only about 1,300 tons of flour in stock whereas normal weekly demand is for about 1,100 to 1,200 tons. He said that in recent weeks only about 28 per cent of the usual demand for flour was being met by the flour mill and while current stocks of wheat would be milled, depending on the availability of electricity, an agreement for the supply of wheat for fiscal year 1989 with the United States was yet to be signed.

"Given the time necessary to complete arrangements and for shipping, no additional wheat would be in the system until around the first week in April," Murray said. He said the new agreement will be for U.S.4 million dollars worth of wheat, the same as for 1988, but government was hoping to conclude supplemental agreements to cover this year's requirements.

The flour shortage has triggered increased prices, with some persons demanding as much as Guy 10 dollars (Guy 1 dollar equals 10 U.S. cents) per pound instead of the regular 2.50 dollars per pound. Queues are now seen daily at bakeries.

On the rice shortage, Murray said domestic consumption was normally 4,000 tons per month but recently there had been disruption in supply because operations had been affected by the electricity problem. He stressed however that "there is sufficient paddy (rice) in the system to meet demand and priority attention is being given to servicing the local market."

Shipments to most overseas markets have been suspended and only those to smaller Caribbean markets are being made. Murray claimed there was a high incidence of smuggling of rice and listed three cases over the last month in which a total of 70 bags of rice were seized by the police and three persons charged and taken before the courts. He said in three cases some 437 bags of sugar were discovered being smuggled and two persons involved were fined a total of 1,300 dollars and another five persons were now before the courts. He said the items were being smuggled to "neighbouring countries."

He blamed "the attitude of some businessmen as a factor in the creation of shortages of essential items."

"In the final analysis, however, the availability of essential items in adequate quantities on an ongoing basis will only be guaranteed when the economy produces and exports at volumes that will ensure the earning of satisfactory levels of foreign exchange," Murray concluded.

Parliament Passes Law Limiting Sale of Shrimp

FL2202203789 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] The Guyanese Parliament passed a fishing law yesterday, concerning the sale of shrimp within its territorial waters. Those trawler captains caught selling their catch at sea to foreign vessels now face 5 years in jail. Their boats must first be moored at a dock in Guyana before they sell any shrimp.

Cabinet Approves Police Complaints Authority

FL1602212889 Bridgetown CANA in English 2047 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Feb 16, CANA—The Guyana cabinet has approved a bill providing for the establishment of an independent Police Complaints Authority, the Guyana Public Communications Agency (GPCA) has reported. The proposed authority will examine complaints of specific cases of misconduct by members of the police force. It will also supervise the investigation of certain serious crimes alleged to have been committed by the members of the police force. However, the authority, will not have investigative powers, GPCA said.

Suriname

Bouterse Speaks on Latest Political Developments

FL1702201189 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Army Commander Desi Bouterse this morning addressed the cadres of the National Army in relation to the latest political developments. During his address, the commander contrasted major remarks made by assembly members [words indistinct] of the Front for Democracy and Development. These remarks were qualified by

Commander [name indistinct] on behalf of the military authority as being destabilizing and a threat to the national security.

In a speech, Army Commander Bouterse briefly explained the reasons for the 1980 coup. He then pointed out that the revolution was meant for the Surinamese to decide for themselves what happens in Suriname. Bouterse pointed out that his national politics, which improved after February 1980, is on its way back. [sentence as heard] The commander said that the military [words indistinct] regarding the developments. This feeling was expressed during the mobilization meeting which took place in relation to the commemoration of the day of the revolution. Bouterse is of the opinion that constructive criticism was made.

President Shankar To Visit Guyana 21-22 March

FL2102040989 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] President Ramsewak Shankar will pay an official visit to neighboring Guyana on March 21 and 22 coming. This visit takes place at the invitation of the Guyanese president, Desmond Hoyte. The heads of state will discuss, among other (?matters), the bilateral relations between the two countries, [word indistinct] cooperation programs for [passage indistinct] regional and national level, but especially in the field of communications.

Suriname and Guyana established diplomatic relations on 25 November 1965.